

Summer number

Punch



Lewitt-Him

2/-

SHELLGUIDE to MAY lanes

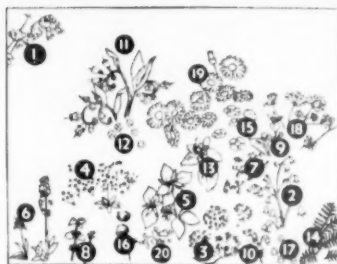
Arranged and painted by Edith and Rowland Hilder



Before the calendar was changed in 1752, (1) *Hawthorn* or *May* blossomed by May Day. Now it lags till 10 or 12 May. Hung on doors, it kept fairies from damaging the season's fertility.

(2) *Bluebells* make woods 'wash-wet like lakes', followed by (3) *Starry Ramsons* and (4) *Woodruff*. Queerer plants are (5) *Herb Paris*, berries of which were given in uneven numbers for epilepsy, and (6) *Early Purple Orchis*, known by more than eighty names. Damp places glow with (7) *Ragged Robin*, (8) *Bugle*, once a wound herb, and (9) *Evergreen Alkanet*, a garden escape wild in the south-west since the Middle Ages. (10) *Water Azens* is common in mountainy parts, (11) *Comfrey* blossoms in ditches—its leaves delicious if fried in batter. (12) *Milkmaids* or *Cuckoo Flowers* are out 'when the Cuckoo begins to sing his pleasant notes without stammering'.

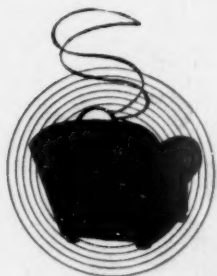
(13) *Jack-by-the-hedge* stands on parade, (14) ferns unravel, (15) *Meadow Buttercups* gild the landscape, (16) *Red Clover*, (17) *Heartsease* and (18) *Cow Parsley* are out, (19) *Ox-Eye Daisies* and (20) *Birdfoot Trefoil* may blossom in the last week.



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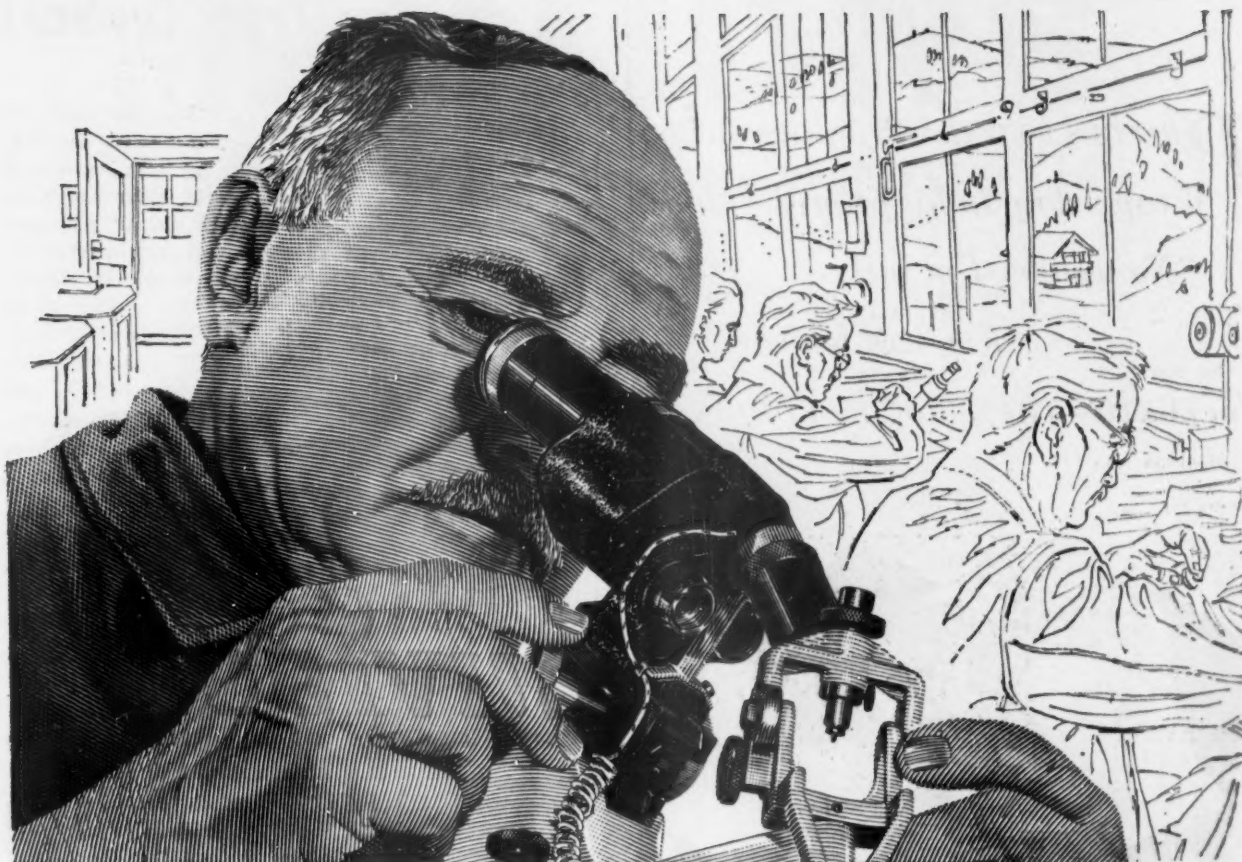


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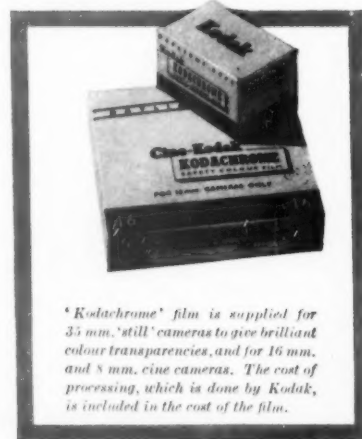
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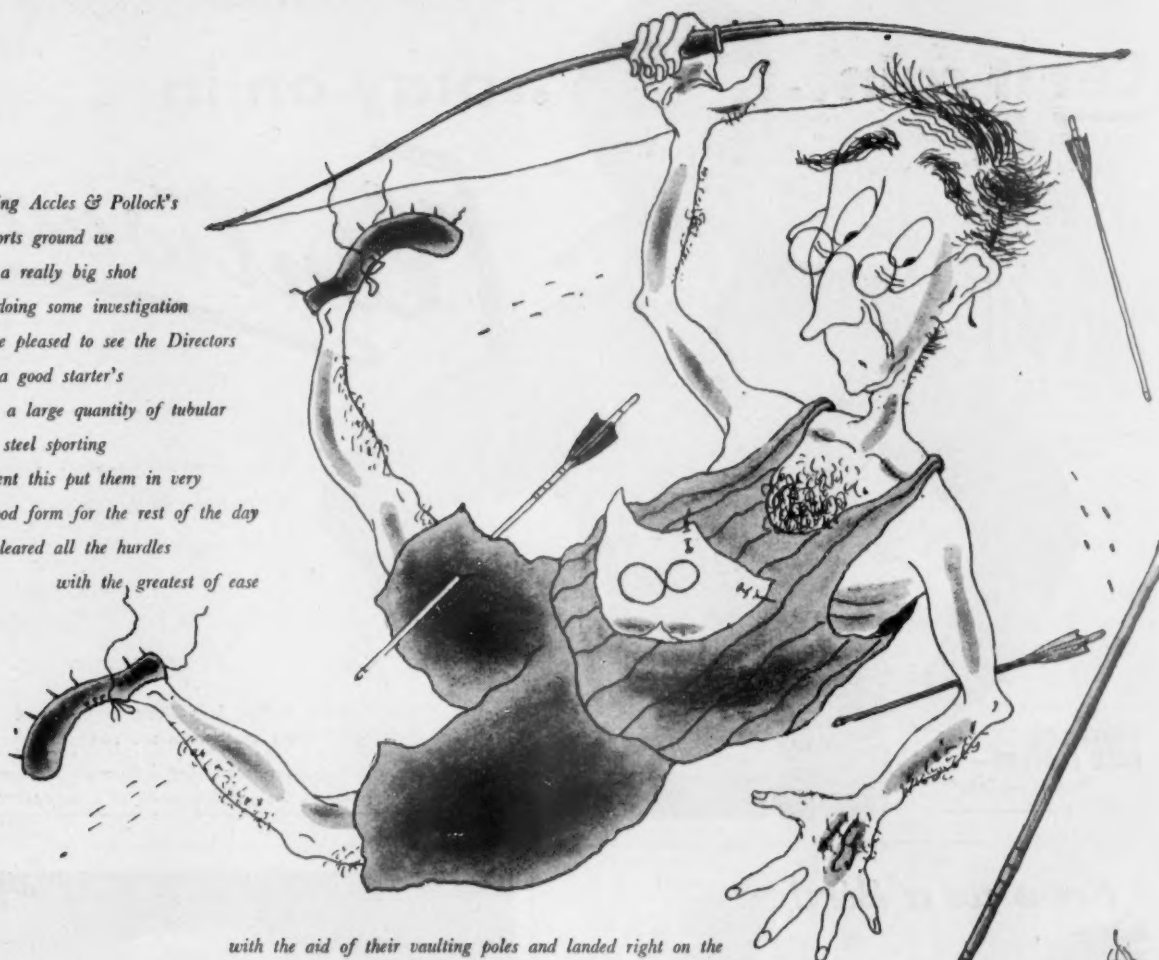
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Go to Bed....



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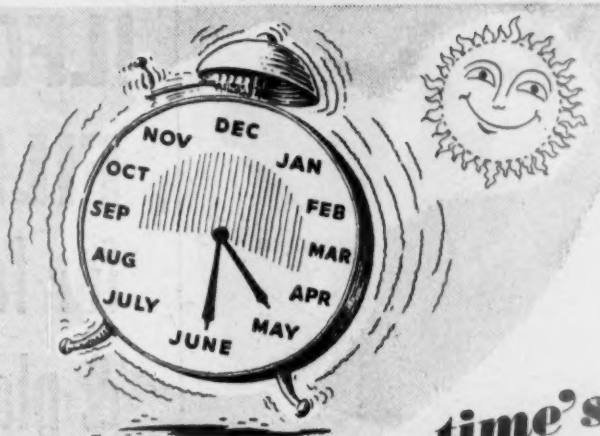
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P.933A



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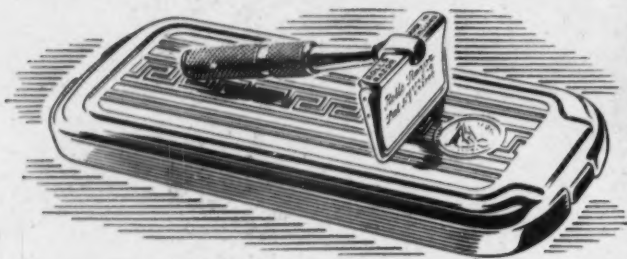
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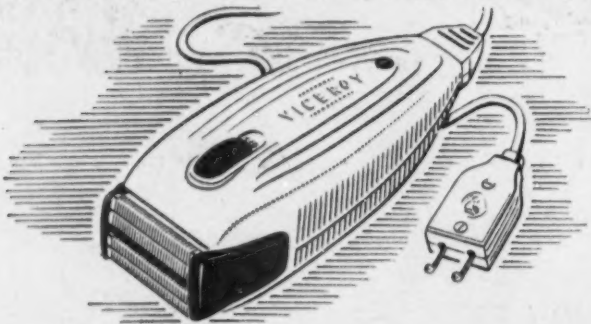
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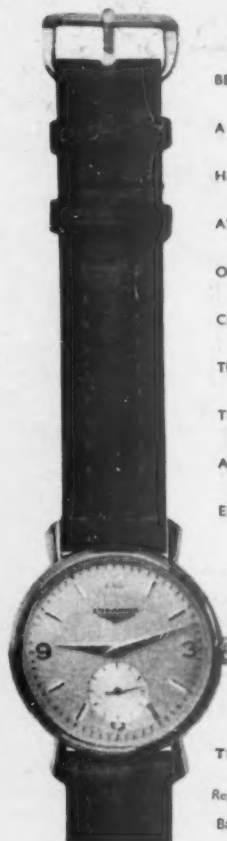
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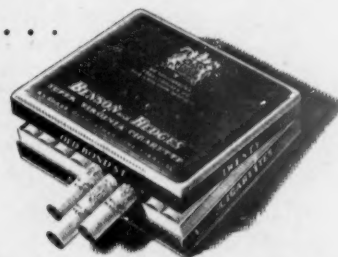
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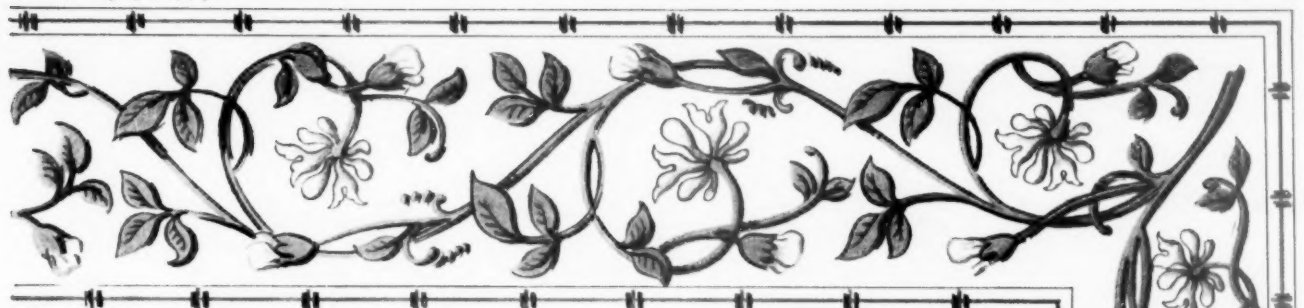
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"**A**RGENT, a double headed Eagle displayed Gules, beaked and legged Azure".

Illustrated within the contemporary illuminated border are the Arms confirmed to John Milton's father, John the Elder, by Sir William Segar, Garter King of Arms, together with the Grant of a Crest.

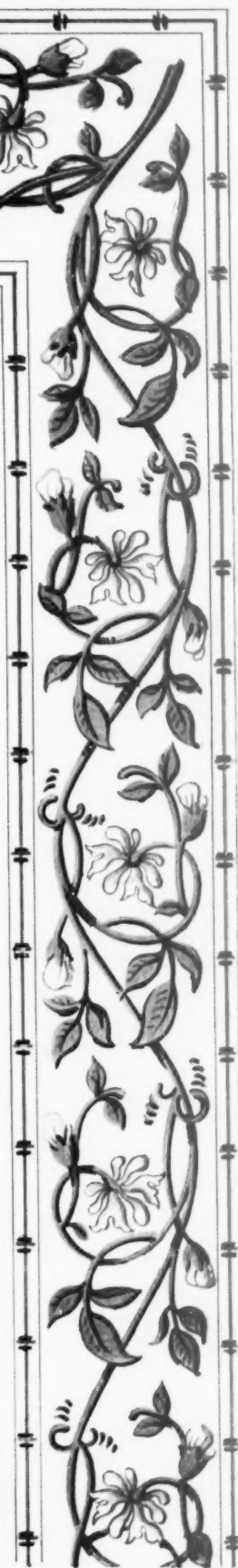
Milton received his M.A. at Cambridge in 1625. He joined the attacks on the established Church from 1641, but did not join the Army, although strongly pro-Parliamentary.

From 1649 until the Restoration he was Latin Secretary of the New Council of State. During this period he lost his sight and remained totally blind until he died in 1674. Milton's great works are known to everybody—"Paradise Lost", "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes". But apart from these he wrote a prodigious number of pamphlets, short poems, sonnets, prose and masques.

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BLACK AND WHITE
cigarettes for Virginia smokers

25 for 5/5

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**
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and your 'French'
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- ☆ **Long Noilly Prat.** Pour two fingers of Noilly Prat into a tumbler, add ice, top with soda.

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* Silvikrin Hair Cream contains Pure Silvikrin, the hair's natural food, to give your hair the life and lustre that come from perfect health.



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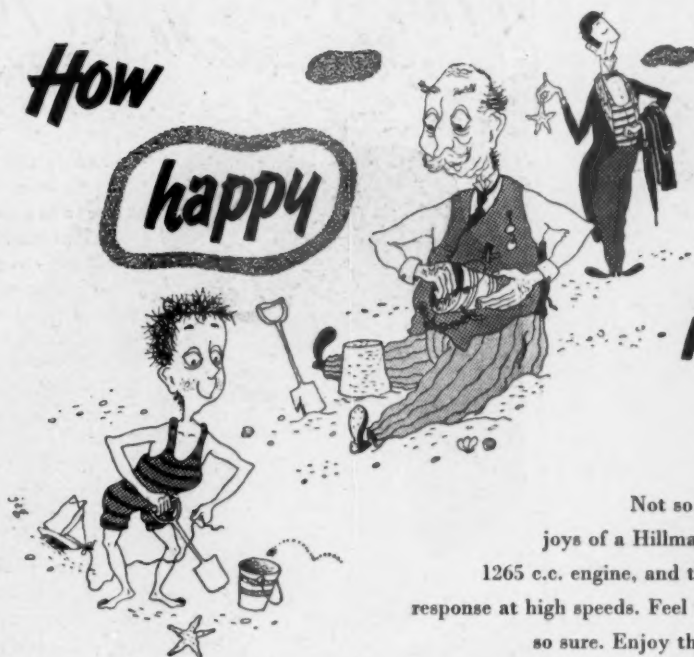
Lenthéric

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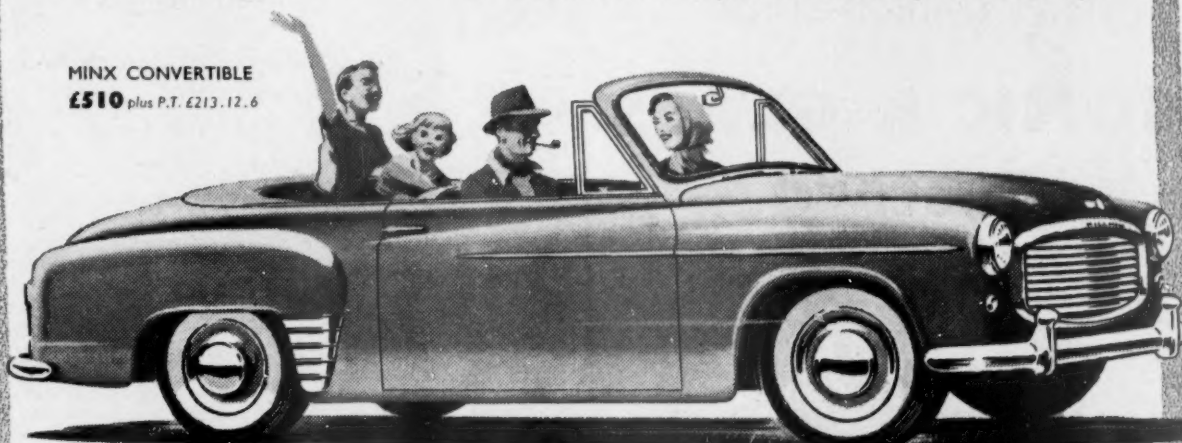
happy



is a sandboy?

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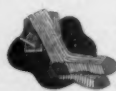
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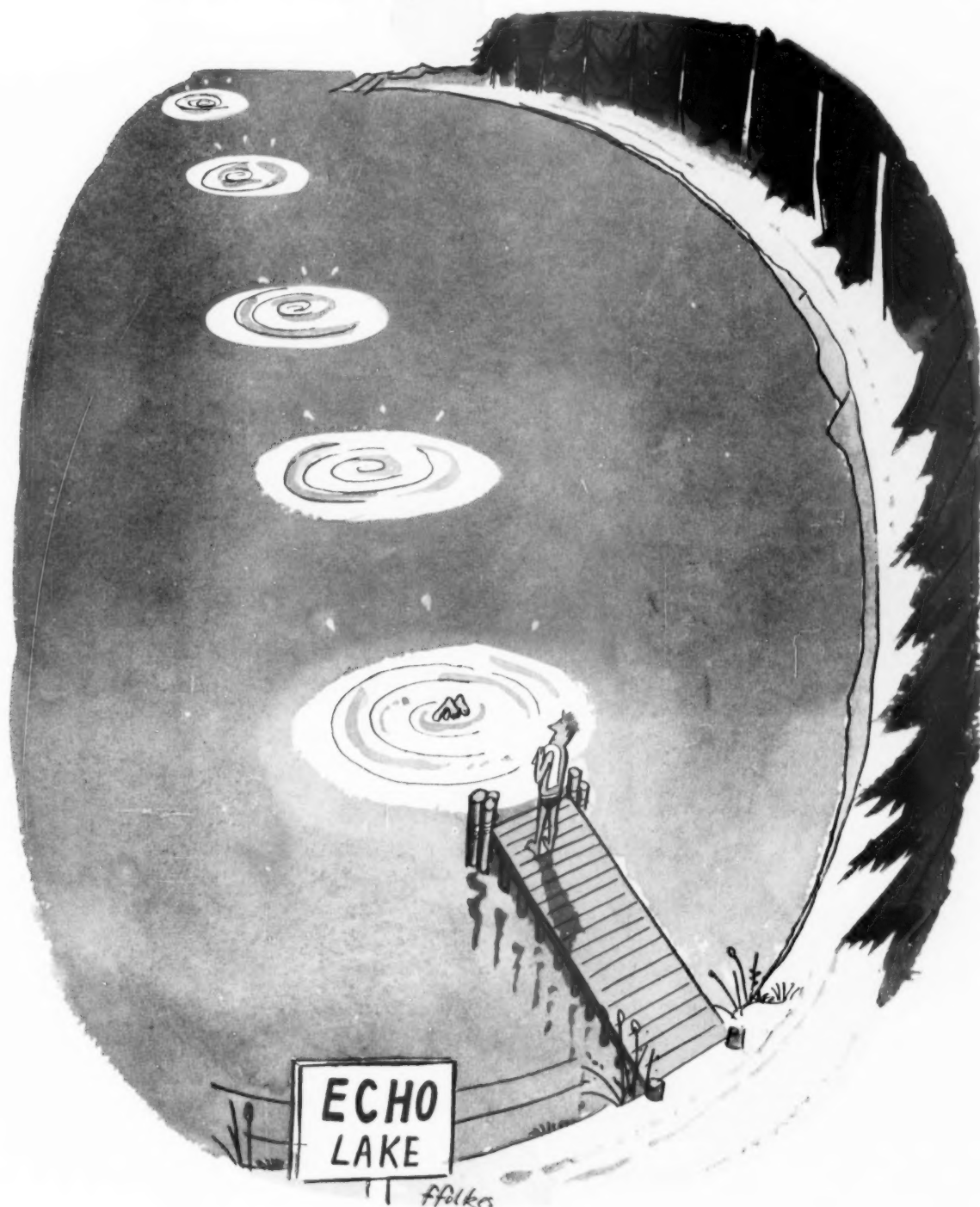
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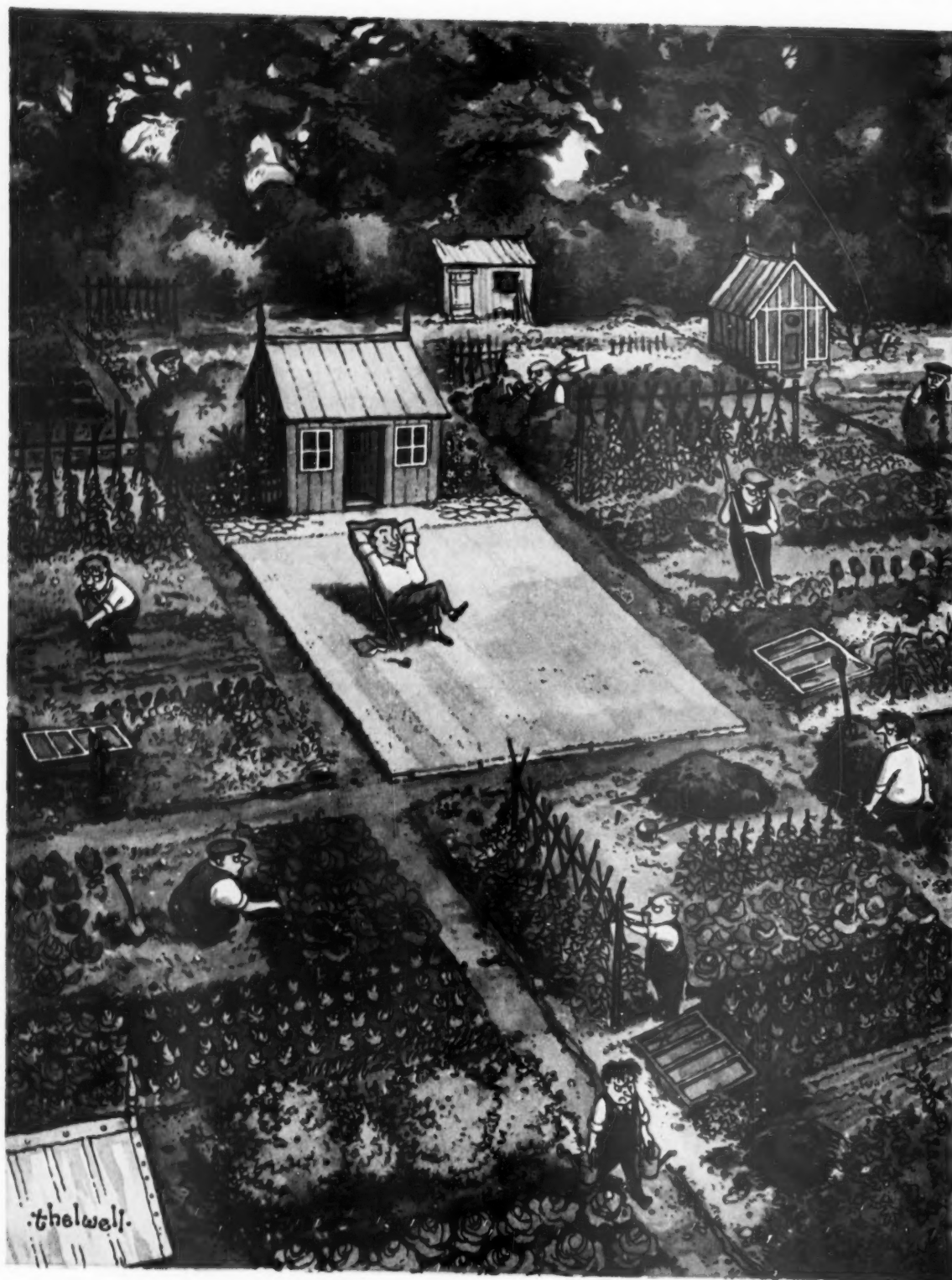
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Harrods

Setting a New Standard in Ready-to-Wear

VOLUME CCXXVII
SUMMER NUMBER 1954







I SPEND my summer standing on a tower
Gazing at cloudland through a pair of glasses.
All round about me lies the Weald in flower;
Under a dilatory smoke-puff passes
The trundling train, propelled by ancient power,
Like a long earwig through the forest-grasses.

I have stood here aloft for countless days,
It seems, and I shall stand for countless more,
While busy humans make their busy ways
Criss-cross about me on the valley floor.
But much is lost in that purple haze
That mounts, mysterious, from the Sussex shore.

The sky, that is the subject of my search,
Is bland, untenanted, pellucid, free.
Below the parapet that bounds my perch
Tremble the topmost branches of the tree;
I rest my eyes upon the greystone church,
Whose clock benignly wags its hand at me.

My comrade is arrayed in soothing blue
And wears a quaint contraption on his ears.
He speaks, but what he says is nothing new;
I answer, likewise, but he hardly hears.
Such outer sounds come to him like the coo
Of burnished doves from dreaming belvederes.

Some time-worn Dragon lumbering through the air
Disturbs this interval of calm repose.
We tell our distant friends that it is there,
How high it is, and, roughly, where it goes.
Across its path a creature like a hare
Vociferates, with radar in its nose.

So go the summer days. By cloistered night,
While the bright stars tread round the inky plains,
The aerial bodies in sublunar flight
Trouble the ears with their melodious strains.
Later, descending stiffly from the height,
We cycle homewards through the summer lanes.

35151/OBS. R. P. LISTER

General Knowledge Paper for Under Twenty-fives

1. Who said (a) "Wait and See,"
(b) "Come up and see me some time,"
(c) "Every day and in every way I get
better and better," (d) "I want to be
alone"?

Who called what a scrap of paper, and
who said he had a secret weapon?

2. The picture "Bubbles" was used
to advertise (a) soap, (b) War Savings,
(c) Dr. Barnardo's Homes, (d) home
perms?

3. Amy Johnson and Amelia Ear-
hart were famous for (a) singing, (b)
dancing, (c) swimming, (d) flying, (e)
preaching?

4. The word "Robot" was invented
by H. G. Wells. True or false?

5. Tranby Croft was (a) a dance,
(b) a horse, (c) a house, (d) a thriller
writer, (e) the King's doctor?

6. With what would you play (a)
mah-jongg, (b) cooncan, (c) beaver, (d)
ragtime?

7. If you were given a crisp brad-
bury you would (a) eat it, (b) put it in
your pocket, (c) hit back.

8. Who were (a) Harry Lauder, (b)
Mrs. Pankhurst, (c) Little Willie, (d)
Little Tich?

9. Who was a most superior purzon?
10. Name a book or play by Edgar
Wallace.

11. Explain: (a) banting, (b) a
shingle, (c) a flapper, (d) a bunjie, (e) a
tin lizzie, (f) Blighty, (g) the Jerries,
(h) the Black and Tans, (i) the Angels
of Mons.

12. What did Young Woodley do?

13. If you called a man a Carnera
it would mean he was (a) like marble,
(b) very strong, (c) flesh-eating, (d) a
heavy smoker, (e) from the West
Indies?

14. Who sang (a) *Ole Man River*,
(b) *Sonny Boy*, (c) *You Are My Heart's
Delight*? Alternatively, sing them
yourself.

15. How many points had President
Wilson?

16. Complete the titles of the
following best sellers: (a) *If*
Comes. (b) in *Jamaica*.

(c) *Good-bye to all* (d) *All Quiet
on the* (e) *The Constant*
..... (f) *The Way of an*

17. What headgear was worn by
(a) Mlle. Lenglen (b) Borotra?

18. Edith Cavell was (a) drowned,
(b) electrocuted, (c) hanged, (d) guillo-
tined, (e) shot?

19. The tomb of Tutankhamen was
excavated by (a) Lord Anglesey, (b)
Lord Cardigan, (c) Lord Carnarvon,
(d) Lord Montgomery, (e) Lord Pem-
broke, (f) Lord Kitchener, (g) Mussolini
(h) Rider Haggard?

20. Do you know Isabel?

21. Say what you know about the
World's Sweetheart.

22. What do you mean by S.A.?

23. Fill in the missing words:

(a) Where did you get that . . . ?

(b) Do shrimps make
.....?

(c) Yes we have no

(d) Here comes the galloping

24. What is the answer?

CLYTEMNESTRA JONES

The Most Forgettable Character I've Met

By COLIN HOWARD

THERE were a lot of folks living in our home-town when we were kids. The town was full of them. Pa always said it was because you most generally did find more folks in a town than you did out in the backwoods, and maybe he was right. Pa was a wise old guy. He used to talk a lot of sense, except maybe at breakfast. He'd bellow his head off at breakfast if his hominy wasn't served right, but it didn't mean anything—it was just that he'd been reading Clarence Day, and hoped one of us would get around to writing a book about him later on.

Well, it wasn't Pa I was setting out to write about, but a little guy we used to see around. Only a little guy, this little

guy was, so short he'd have had to stand on tiptoe to walk under a duck. We used to see him around. Sometimes he'd be wearing an overcoat, sometimes he wouldn't. It all depended on whether it was summer or winter. Us kids used to like the summer best, with the hayrides and the swimming and that. There was a river that was fine for swimming. One day a kid fell in with all his clothes on. They pulled him out okay, and I remember this little guy was one of the first to come up and ask what had happened and advise the kid to run off home and get into dry clothes.

Well, we got so used to seeing this little guy around we didn't hardly notice him any more. He always had a friendly word for us, though I don't recollect right now what the word was. One day I ran into him at the drugstore. Pa, he'd given me a dime for pulling up jimson-weed in the back-yard, though the bunch I showed up with was one I'd speculated five cents on from another kid, who'd finished with it. Pa wasn't the sort to go right out into the backyard and count the jimson-weed to make sure there was some missing. So there I sat on a high stool down at the drugstore watching the clerk jerk me a chocolate-soda when the little guy comes in and says "Hi, kid." I answered back "Hi, sir." He said "Stepped in for a soda, huh?" Then he kind of smiled, and bought something, I don't know what it was, and went out again. He was always doing things like that.

One day there was a fire in our town. A frame-building had caught fire right the way round the frame. The rumour went round it was the house where the little guy lived. As it turned out, it wasn't. He lived in a frame-house, all right, but half a dozen blocks away. That little guy was right back at work the very next day, just as though he hadn't had a pretty narrow shave.

Well, time went by, and us kids kind of grew up and got us jobs, and one day I said to Pa, "Say, Pa, I don't seem to have seen that little guy around for two-three days." "Ain't surprisin', son," drawled Pa. Pa was going through a phase when he considered himself a tall, lean Texas Ranger. "He left town eight or mebbe ten years back."

Just for the moment I felt bad, right in the pit of my stomach.

"Gee!" I said. "Gee!"

I took a walk by myself, and went down to the river. But I didn't go swimming. Somehow I didn't want to. Maybe it was all the ice and snow around that made me feel that way.

I wished I could remember what the little guy looked like, and whether I'd liked him or not. I guess that little guy was the sort of little guy anybody would forget. I don't even remember his name. In fact I'm probably thinking of a different little guy altogether.



"Shall I let it go?"

It was Great while it Lasted

By HONOR TRACY

NO one in the valley could talk of anything but the wager between Michael Murphy and Tim O'Shea: no man, that is, for the matter was carefully kept from the women. Above on the bogland they paused in their work and, with a hand to the small of their backs, discussed the wild wicked folly of it. The postmaster threw official business to the winds and telephoned round to his colleagues in the little villages round the bay, one after the other. Father Lehané had the full details within an hour of setting forth on his rounds and agitatedly bicycled off to inform the Canon. All the men of the place, cawing away like a bunch of gloomy old rooks, agreed that the pair had shown a reprehensible frivolity; and yet everyone in his heart was proud and glad.

The heroine of the affair was a pert little miss from Dublin. She wore a

wine-coloured suit, a green hat with feathers and a veil, and gloves with spangles all over the backs of them: and her elegance was the despair of the local girls. Although she was on a holiday here, she was not at all like the other holiday-makers who in the summer months made their way to this beauty-spot from the cities. These would throw themselves heart and soul into the simplicities of rural life and drive the people mad by informing them how lucky they were to enjoy them always. No one had ever heard this little person speak. She tripped along the muddy lanes in her high-heeled shoes, glancing never to left or to right, with a look on her pretty face that was both vacant and smug.

Try as it would, the local grapevine had been unable to collect any useful information about her. Even Mr. Ring the postmaster, as a rule so helpful in cases of this sort, had come on nothing factual in the correspondence. It was

understood that she was related to the Bat O'Sullivans, with whom she was staying; but the O'Sullivans, flown with pride, refused to discuss her and made it clear that casual visitors would not be welcomed. This was deeply felt by all, and later in the year, when Bat would be needing help with his potatoes or his turf, the mistake could be brought home; but for the time being there was nothing for it but to watch and wait, compare notes and hazard conjectures.

"Oh, she's a proud old thing! Oh, she's black in the face with pride!" the women snorted. The men said nothing, but looked out of the corners of their eyes as she passed them on the road.

Then Michael Murphy upped and came out with his challenge. He was a fine young man, as strong as a bull, and he had black curly hair and eyes as blue as the sea. There wasn't a girl in the country but would have taken him, except that his mother refused him leave to marry. "Time enough for that



when I'm dead and gone," she used to say. She was good for another twenty years at least.

It was in O'Regan's bar on the Friday evening, not long after closing time, and Michael was just in that happy state where he'd either pick a fight or start singing "The Boys of Wexford." It was always touch and go as to which it would be. But now all at once he leaned back in his chair and put one boot on the table and drawled: "I will take the city woman to the dance on Sunday. 'Twill be a change, you might say."

"God help you!" said Tim O'Shea.



There was a gentle pity in his voice that was too much for Michael altogether.

"Is it God help me, then?" he asked. "Oh, I'll take her. She'll come for me, all right."

"Have sense, man," said the compassionate Tim.

"What will you put on the table, Tim O'Shea?" Michael roared at him. He dived into his pockets and whipped out an envelope with his wages for the week inside. He threw it down on the table and folded his arms. "Match that!"

Tim's wages were out before he knew what he did, and they went down on the table as well.

"You bold thing!"

A sigh went up from the onlookers that was partly of satisfaction but still more of horror. In this little corner of the earth money was not to be taken lightly. Every man in the bar was as if frozen, some with a drink half-way to their lips, some in the act of lighting a cigarette, some just leaning towards the pair like trees before a gale. Not a sound could be heard but the waves beating the shore and the cry of the gulls. Then Michael took both the packets and passed them to O'Regan behind the bar.

"You'll hold the money, so," he said, lightly.

Every soul in the smoky, dirty little tap-room at once was for Michael. The magnificence of his action stirred the sleeping poets in them: his gay nonchalance in doing it filled them with helpless wonder. And the cream of it all was that he'd startled Tim O'Shea into doing the like. It was well known in the valley that O'Shea looked three times at a sixpence before he let it go, and it was believed also that he'd sell his grandmother for its mate. For a moment the bitterness of their daily lives was forgotten; they stared at Michael as he sat laughing and triumphant in his young manhood with something like love.

The next day was Saturday and, as if sensing that great things were afoot, the weather changed. For weeks it had been dull and grey with long trails of weeping mist curling about the mountain peak and blotting out the far shore of the bay. Now a dazzling sun shone in a cloudless sky: the sea was oily calm and the colour of a sparrow's egg; and the fuchsias all along the hedges fluttered crimson like the banners of an army.

The little miss from Dublin put on smoked spectacles and a backless cotton dress and lay sunning herself provocatively on the beach as if she knew they were all talking about her.

Michael set about his campaign directly he got up: he determined to leave nothing to chance. First he sent his young brother across to the Big House, which employed him, to say he had strained a muscle. He took out his blue Sunday suit and examined it carefully, removing a few spots of grease with his thumb-nail. He brushed his hat with the back of his hand and he polished his boots until they glittered. Then he walked to the post office and asked for a packet of razor blades.

"O God! It's a funeral, then?" asked Mr. Ring, innocently.

Michael blushed and hesitated as the blades were given him. "Mr. Ring! Would you ever let me pay you later, like?" he asked, in a humble voice.

"Is he looking for credit?" Mr. Ring inquired of a slab of bacon that reposed on the morning's mail. "And where's me security?" Then he chuckled. "Take the old blades, boy, and give me the money if they do their work!" As soon as Michael was gone he got on the telephone and passed this further item to his subscribers.

Michael next called on the village schoolmaster, who was busy in the garden pulling caterpillars off his cabbages and throwing them in a jar of salted water. Early that spring Michael had repaired his roof free and for love, and he now gazed steadily up at this roof as if searching for some crack or flaw in it. The schoolmaster followed the line of his eye with complete understanding.

"I hope now," the boy said courteously, "it's the way the old roof is holding still?"

"Ah, that was a great job you did there," the master said.

Michael discussed the weather fluently after that, leaving no aspect of it unconsidered; and then, casually, on the point of departure inquired: "You'd never be going to the dance to-morrow, of course?"

"Sure, who'd come with me?" said the other, modestly.

"If it was the way you were driving in, Mr. O'Toole, there might be a place in the yoke for meself and another?"

"Is it your mother, did you say?" asked Mr. O'Toole, with lightning speed. "Well, then, I'll do it. An old lady like that to perch on the back of your bicycle for eight miles, like a monkey on a stick! 'Twould be murder!"

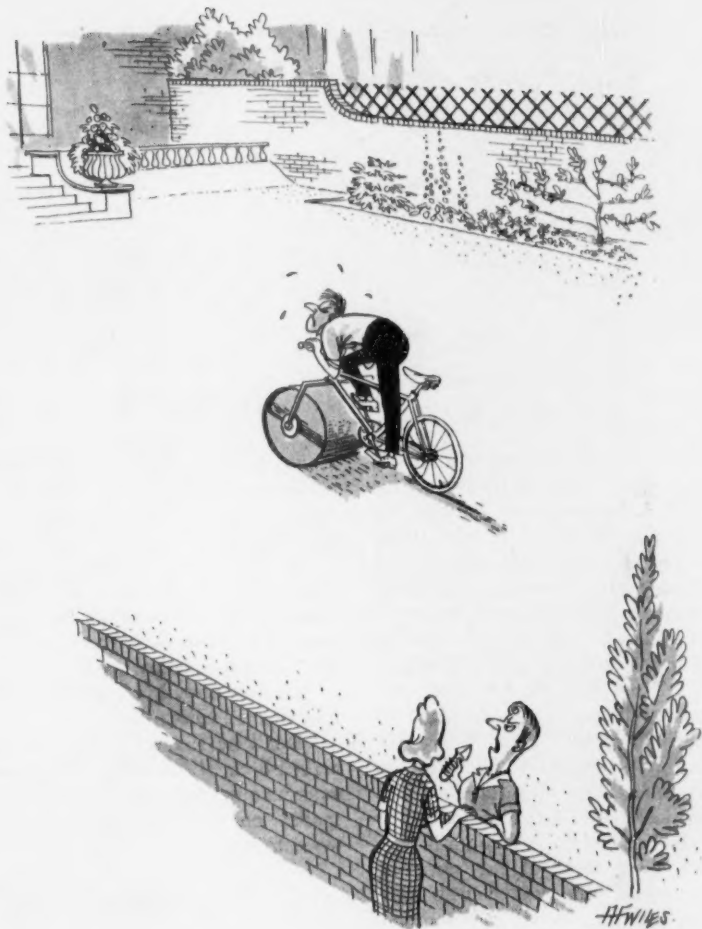
Having waved Michael a friendly good-bye, he at once tried to get on to the village doctor to apprise him of the development; but Mr. Ring was too busy to put him through.

It was not the custom of the valley to start drinking before nightfall, but by one o'clock O'Regan's bar was full. The men were bursting with talk and they knew if they went home to dinner it would all spill out, causing no end of trouble with their wives. Each man now had an important piece of news to pass on. Michael had hired a motor-car and a chauffeur. He had bought a new razor, and a bottle of pomade for his hair, and the box of gold-tipped scented cigarettes that had been maturing in Mr. Ring's window for the past three years. The Canon was going to preach on the evils of betting. The *Tralee Gazette* was sending a photographer with a flashlight. The girl had already consented: in fact she was heels over head in love with Michael and was at him to marry her. As the dark porter seeped into their blood, so did their fancy grow ever more luminous; and Tim O'Shea heard it all with death in his heart.

Then Michael Murphy himself strutted in and a roar of welcome went up. A row of drinks, bought by admirers, fell in along the counter as if by magic. Tim could bear it no longer and, draining his glass, he crept away. Not a head turned to see him go.

He wandered off up the mountain road that led away from his cottage, afraid to go home. At the thought of what his wife would presently be saying his very bones seemed to dissolve with terror. She would stand, arms akimbo, the wild wisps of hair shooting out of her head like so many snakes, and curse him to hell and back. Once while fishing he had dropped a half-crown in the river by accident, and, summoning their six children, she had screamed out that their father was no man but a monster. The mind took fright at what she would scream at him now. Miserably he seated himself on a pile of stones and stared vacantly over the sea.

The long black figure of Father



"He's always thinking up ways to make his work easier."

Lehane came pedalling up the slope and dismounted.

"Well, then, Tim O'Shea," he said. "So you've no more sense than a child of five."

"Oh, Father!" moaned Tim.

"Will I go to O'Regan's now and bring you the money?"

"Ah now, Father! Not at all! 'Twould never do!" he cried in desperation. The ridicule of the neighbours was more deadly to him than even his wife: he could never face the twinkling eyes all round, the lowered voices as he came along and the sly allusive remarks.

"And who's to feed the children so?" the curate went on without pity or remorse. "You'll be begging your bits of bread here and there. And all because of the wicked pride that's in you: pride! the deadliest sin of them all."

"Don't be telling the Canon, Father," pleaded Tim.

"I've told him," said the other, implacably. "And he's fit to be tied. Oh, you haven't heard the end of it yet!" He tucked up his skirts and rode away without another word.

Contemplating the forces arrayed against him, O'Shea fell into a sort of coma. He sat there on the road, with the bright day mocking his despair, a little ruined heap of a fellow. He thought again of his wife and of the hideous power of women. And then all at once it was as if a miracle happened: there was a sudden dazzling flash in his mind: and leaping up he made down to the valley again as fast as his legs would carry him.

Down in O'Regan's bar the holiday spirit was mounting from one moment



to the next. In the centre of it all was Michael, with his cap on the back of his curly head, laughing and downing the drink like one of the heroes of old. The men were now convinced that the day was already won. They had skipped over the irksome practical details that still lay in Michael's path and were soaring in the unconfined spaces of the imagination. Time was standing still, and themselves lifted to a new plane of existence altogether.

They were roaring and cheering and singing when all at once the door flew open and a little old lady marched in and up to the bar, cleaving a path for herself by the sheer force of her outraged womanhood. She was a bent tiny creature with a few white hairs screwed to a knot on the top of her head and the face of a peevish hawk; and even as the men watched her the drink began slowly to die in them.

"Malachy O'Regan," she said, in a voice like the Last Trump, "let you give me Michael's wages!"

A little groan went up from the onlookers.

"And what would I be doing with Michael's wages, ma'am?" parried O'Regan, with his two great hands resting toad-wise on the counter.

"G'wan out of it! Isn't Tim O'Shea after tellin' me the way you all tricked him? May the Lord look sideways at you! Give them me now, or will I come round to you?"

O'Regan knew that she meant what she said, and the very idea was too much for him. He was not going to get bottled up behind the bar with Mamo Murphy if he could help it. With misery the men saw him reach for the glass jar where the two packets were stowed

away. As his hand came slowly forward a tiny claw shot out and snatched the money. Then, folding her shawl about her, the old woman turned on Michael.

"You'll not get a shilling of this for yourself," she informed him. "Not a drink nor a smoke for the next seven days. Honest to God, you've no more sense than your father had!"

"Ah wait now, Ma," he began, in a low, shamed voice.

"Don't be shoutin' me down," she barked back. "And come on up home with me now. Isn't the hay waitin' and spoilin' on you? And isn't there the wood to chop and the water to bring?

And me lord sends word to the house that he pulled his wrist! And me lord stands in the bar all day, drinkin' and boastin'! Yerra, for God's sake! Who'd be a poor widder woman with an eyeless, armless, legless hulk of a useless son?"

As she scolded on Michael seemed to wither and shrink. He ceased to be the pride and joy of the valley and became a sheepish lout. Silently he followed as she turned and stamped away shouting up the road to their cabin. The golden evening was full of the harsh, awful voice of her common sense; the crimson fuchsias drooped in the hedges. As they came to the cross-roads Mary MacCarthy was driving her cow off from the meadow and she timidly raised her head and gave Michael a mournful look from her great soft eyes. One of these days, they had promised themselves, they were going to be married, if they were not too old when the time for it came.

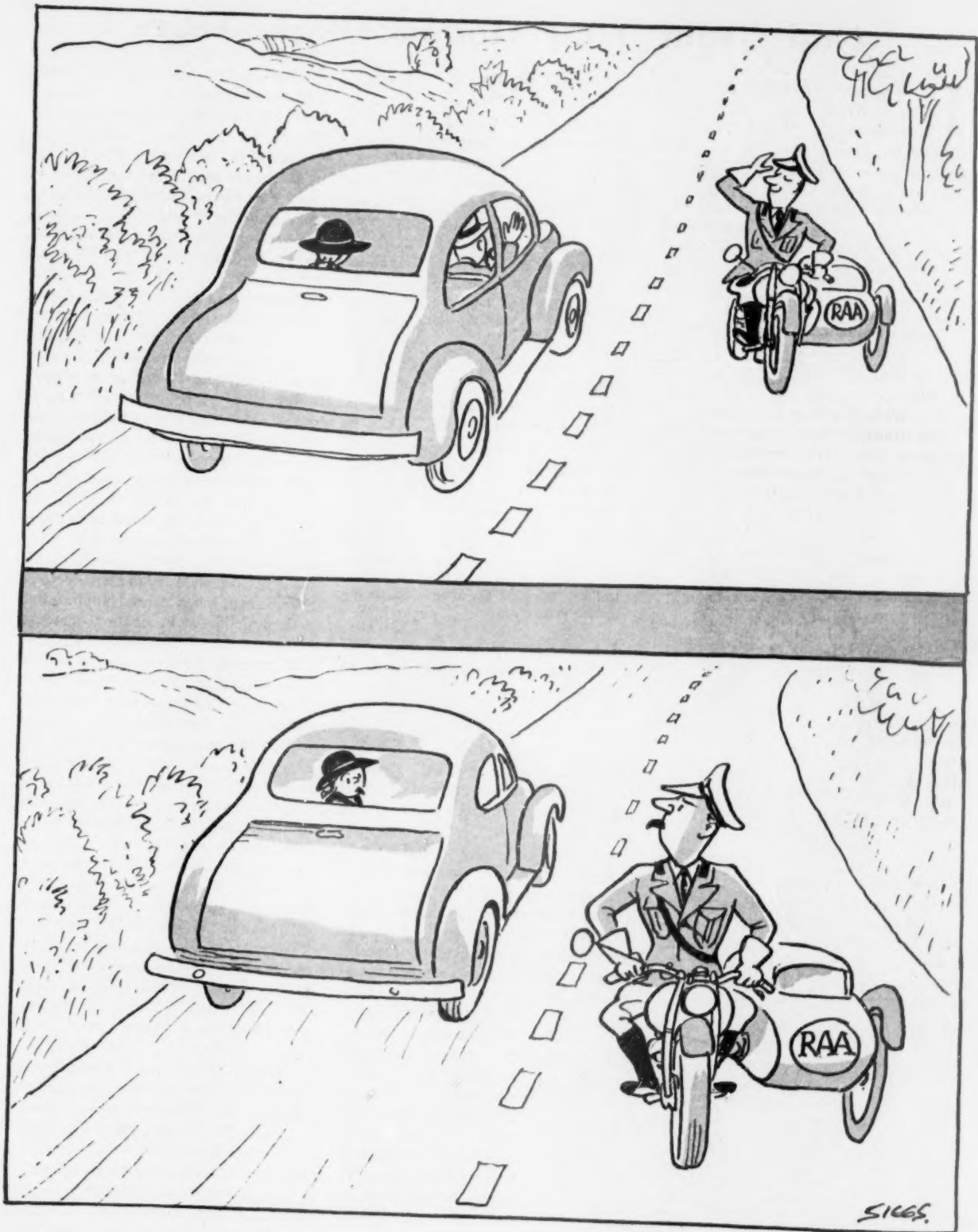
Down in O'Regan's bar the men drank on till most of them were lying about on the floor. And as the sun went down and a breeze got up, the little miss from Dublin rose to her feet, yawned, took off her smoked glasses and made for Bat O'Sullivan's cottage, waggling her hips as she went.

Gardening Note for the May Queen

RECUMBENT from some unexplained disorder Which made her state of health extremely wonky But yet did not deter her, incidentally, From chattering the hind leg off a donkey, The May Queen in affecting tones bequeathed Her garden tools to Effie ("Let her take 'em!") And urged the latter never to forget To train the rose in their herbaceous border, Which twined about the parlour sentimentally And was permitted to become enwreathed About the May Queen's box of mignonette.

One would have thought that common sense dictated That if the mignonette-box were translated To some less inconvenient position And dealt with as an independent unit, Not only would the rose be unencumbered But Effie more admissible to prune it— To hack its shoots to the required condition And (as the May Queen would have said) to stake 'em. As for the garden tools, their range unnumbered: They helped those girls to keep the garden weeded, Yet one confesses to a strong suspicion A good alarm clock was more sorely needed.

D. A. WILKINSON



God Grant Your Honour Many Years

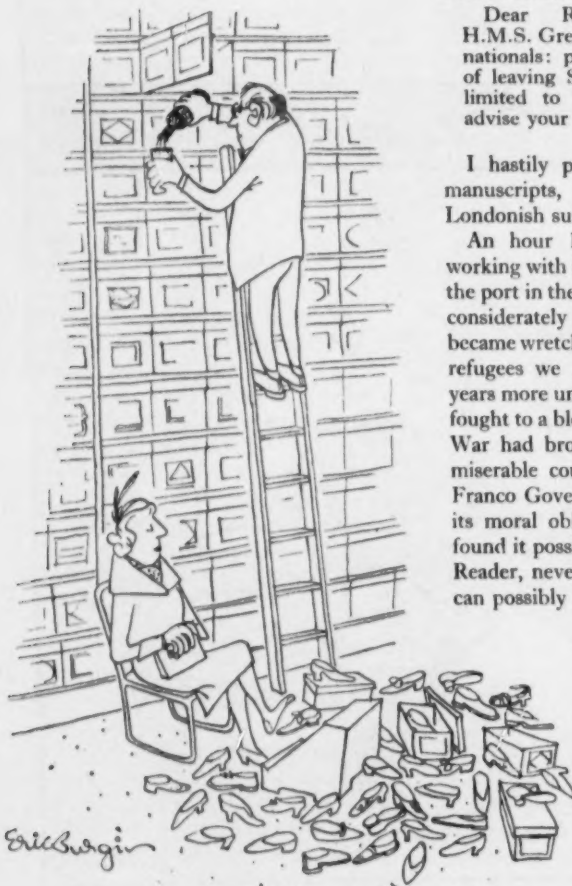
By ROBERT GRAVES

I SLIT open the flimsy blue envelope and, pulling out an even flimsier typewritten slip, began to read without the least interest; but recoiled like the man in *Amos* who carelessly leans his hand on a wall and gets bitten by a serpent. The Spanish ran:

With regard to a matter that should prove of interest to your Honour: please be good enough to appear in person at this Police Headquarters on any working day of the present month between the hours of 10 and 12. Business: to withdraw your Residence Permit.

God grant your Honour many years!
Signed: Emilio Something-or-other.
Stamped in purple: The Police Headquarters, Palma, Majorca.

For two or three minutes I sat grinning cynically at the nasty thing. "*Para retirar la Autorización de Residencia*"! Well, that was that!



Eric Burgin

Though often warned that in a totalitarian state anything might happen, without warning, without mercy, without sense, I had imagined it could never happen to me. I first came to Majorca, twenty-five years ago, during Primo de Rivera's dictatorship; and stayed on throughout the subsequent Republic. Then one fine summer's day in 1936 small bombs, and leaflets threatening larger bombs, began to fall on Palma; soldiers hauled down the Republican flag; unknown young men with rifles invaded our village of Binijiny and tried to shoot the Doctor by mistake for a Socialist politician; the boat service to Barcelona was suspended; coffee and sugar disappeared from the shops; all mail ceased; and one day the British Consul scrawled me a note:

Dear Robert,—This afternoon H.M.S. Grenville will evacuate British nationals: probably your last chance of leaving Spain in safety. Luggage limited to one handbag. Strongly advise your coming.

I. L.

I hastily packed my handbag with manuscripts, underclothes and a Londonish suit.

An hour later Kenneth, who was working with me, and I were heading for the port in the taxi which the Consul had considerably sent out to us. Thus we became wretched refugees, and wretched refugees we continued to be for ten years more until the Civil War had been fought to a bloody close, until the World War had broken out and run its long miserable course, and finally until the Franco Government, disencumbered of its moral obligations to the Axis, had found it possible to sanction our return. Reader, never become a refugee, if you can possibly avoid it, even for the sake of that eventual happy homecoming in an air-taxi, with a whole line of bristly village chins awaiting your fraternal kisses. Stay where you are, kiss the rod and, if very hungry, eat grass or the bark off the trees. To live in furnished rooms and travel about from country to country—

England, Switzerland, England, France, the States, England again—homesick and disorientated, seeking rest but finding none, is the Devil's own fate.

This brings the story up to 1946. I came back to Binijiny, and thanks to the loyalty of the natives found my house very much as I had left it. Certain ten-year-old glass jars of home-made green tomato pickle had matured wonderfully, and so had a pile of *Economists* and *Times Lit. Supps.* "Happily ever after," I promised myself. Then in 1947 Kenneth joined me, and we resumed work together.

And now this! "*Para retirar la . . .*"

But why? I belong to no political organization, am not a *frémason*, have always refused to write either against, or for, any particular form of Spanish Government, and if ever people ask me: "What is it like on your island?" am careful to reply: "It is not mine; it is theirs." As a foreigner who must apply every two years for a renewal of his residence permit, I try to be the perfect guest: quiet, sober, neutral, appreciative and punctilious in money matters. Then of what crime could I be accused? Had someone perhaps taken exception to an historical novel of mine about Spanish colonization under Philip II? Or to the rockets I release every July 24th, which happens to be my birthday as well as the anniversary of the capture of Gibraltar? Had some Cathedral canon denounced me for having acted as Spanish-English interpreter at a serio-comic meeting of solidarity between the corn-fed Protestant choir of the U.S. aircraft-carrier *Midway* and the encatacombed Evangelical Church of Majorca? Where could I find out? The police would doubtless refuse an explanation. What means had I of forcing them to say more than "Security Reasons," which is about all that our own democratic Home Office ever concedes?

Nobody had invited me to settle in Majorca; almost anyone had a right to object to my continued presence there.

... So this was why they had brooded so long over my 1953 application for renewing the damned permit!

My wife probably wouldn't much mind a change of house and food and climate. But how could I break the

news to Kenneth? Although I should be sunk without him, he could hardly be expected to share my exile again; the poor fellow had hardly enjoyed a day's happiness, I knew, during those ten long years. And what if our long association had put him on the black list too? And just as he was buying that motor-cycle!

Yet why the hell should I take this lying down? After twenty-five years—after all the sterling and dollars I had imported—and my four children almost more Majorcan than the Majorcans! I'd hire a car, drive to Palma at once, visit the Chief of Police and ask, very haughtily, who was responsible for what was either a tactless practical joke or a cruel *atropellada*. (*Atropellada*, in this sense, has no simple familiar English equivalent, because it means deliberately running over someone in the street.) Afterwards I'd ring up the British Embassy at Madrid. And the Irish Embassy. And the American Embassy. And . . .

Here came the car. Poor Kenneth! Poor myself! Poor children! It would have to be England, I supposed. And London, I supposed, though in my previous refugee days I had always been plagued by abscesses and ulcers when I tried to live there. My wife loves London, of course. But how could we find a house large enough and cheap enough for us all? And what about schools for the children? And a nurse for the baby? And who would care for our cats in Binijiny?

I had forgotten that this being a total fiesta in honour of San Sebastian, the Patron Saint of Palma, all offices would be closed. Nothing doing until the next day; meanwhile church bells rang, boot-blacks pestered me, Civil Guards sported their full-dress poached-egg head-dresses and stark white gloves, and the population drifted aimlessly about the streets in their Sunday best.

As I stood checkmated outside the Bar Figaro, a dapper Spaniard greeted me and asked me politely after my health, my family and my busy pen, remarking what a pity it was that so few of my books were available in Spanish and French translation. I couldn't place him. He was probably a shirt-maker, or a hotel receptionist, or a Tennis Club Committee-man, or a senior Post Office clerk, whom I would recognize at once in his proper setting. Awkward!

"Come, Don Roberto, let us take a



"I expect the perspective will be hopeless as usual."

coffee together!" I agreed miserably, suspecting that, like everyone else, he wanted to cross-examine me on contemporary English literature. But, after all, why shouldn't I continue to humour these gentle, simple, hospitable people? It was their island, not mine. And the Bar Figaro has sentimental memories for me.

We sat down. I offered him my pouch of black tobacco and a packet of *Marfil* papers. He rolled cigarettes for us both, handed me mine to lick and stick, snapped his lighter for me, and said: "Well, distinguished friend, may we expect your visit soon? I ventured to send you an official reminder only yesterday. When will you find time to withdraw your Residence Permit—'Para retirar la Autorización de Residencia'—from our files? It has been

waiting there, duly signed, since late October."

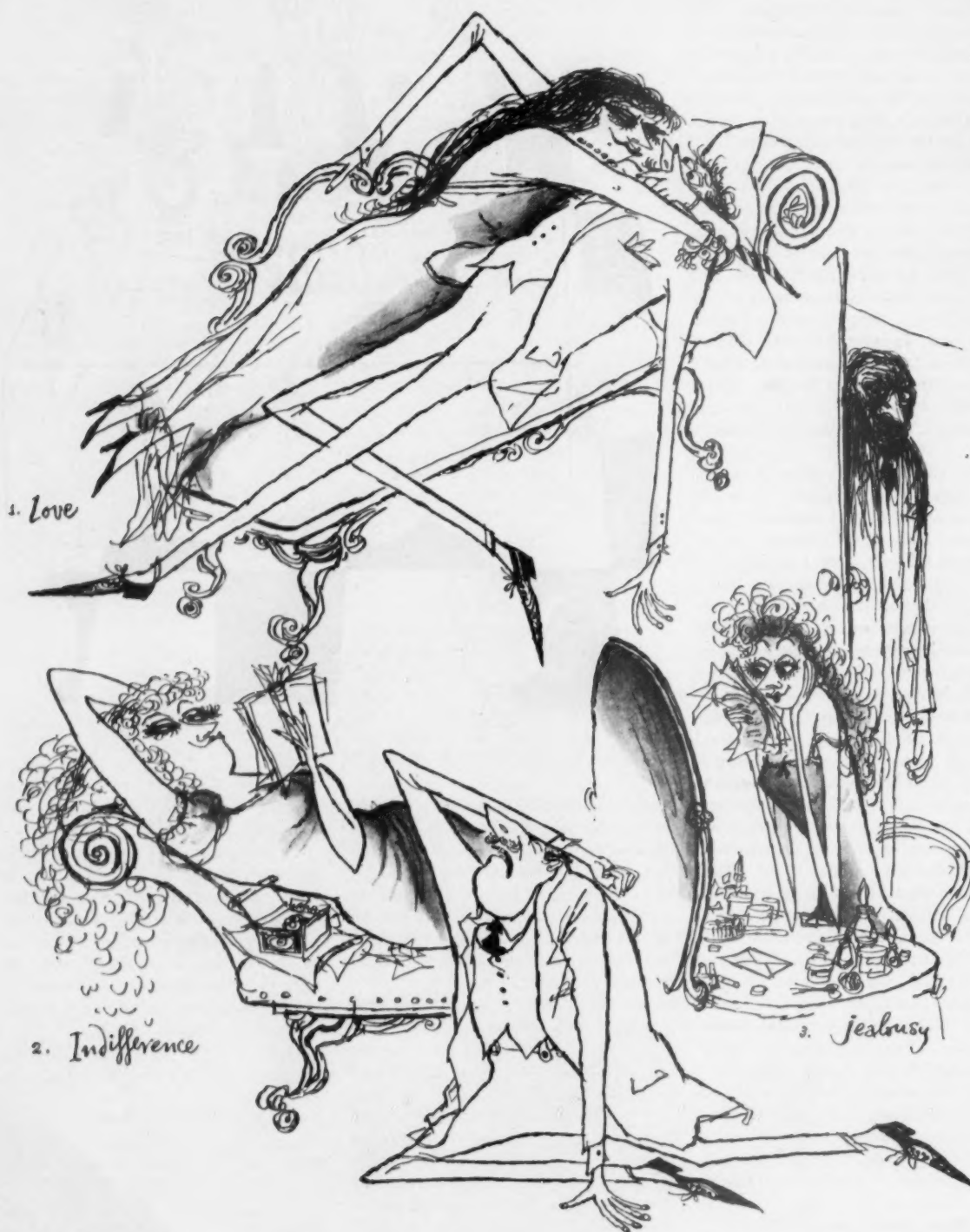
In my gratitude I gave Don Emilio an hour's expert literary criticism of the works of such English *gran-novelistas* as Mohgum, Ootschley, Estrong and Oowohg, promising not only to visit him at the earliest opportunity with the necessary 1 peseta 55 centimos stampage but to lend him a contraband Argentine edition of Lorca's *Poems*.

God grant him many years! What a sleepless night he saved me!

"For Sale. Ideal Home for Retired Gentleman. First class Bungalow cottage . . . The site on which this building is situated is on the top of a hill, with a lovely panoramic view of the Penal Settlement . . ."—*British Guiana paper*
Perfect for counting blessings.

How to Kill a Man in Six Efforts

By RONALD SEARLE





Cooks About Town

By PHOEBE YOUNG

THE young men about town are cooking, and never has the culinary art had such passionate devotees as its new converts. Nightly they create miracles in their bachelor flats, and it is as clear as cold consommé that Philip Harben has nothing on the dukes, earls, baronets and well-heeled misters who are discovering that an omelet at home is worth two soufflés in a restaurant.

Any young man who used to speed out of London early on Friday afternoon for his country-house dose of exercise and fresh air now spends Saturday mornings walking the streets of Soho and deeply inhaling the pungent smell of garlic, coffee and cheap red wine. He is shopping: over one arm is a wicker basket and under the other a stick of French bread. His girl sits at home wondering why he never takes her away for the week-end or, at worst, shopping in Bond Street. But what attraction has Bond Street for a cook? There is no tempting display of saffron rice, garlic vinegar and pimentos.

His new-found passion dominates his thoughts and dictates his actions. His every spare half-hour is devoted to cooking—before shaving in the morning

and after bathing in the evening he marinades fish, renders fat and tends his stock-pot.

But this devotion is not directed at his stomach alone—he entertains his friends lavishly. The days of dining out are over and the debts have never been so well fed—in spite of the mock modesty of his invitation—"Come to dinner on Friday, but you'd better have a snack first. I'm cooking."

She arrives to find him in a blue denim apron and embroiled in the kitchen—always the first and often the only room shown to guests. Right at the start of the evening the cook makes it clear whether he is a French-country-farmhouse or English-stately-home type cook.

The French-country-farmhouse type cook lives and eats in his kitchen, which has gay check curtains, a large wooden table and an array of copper pans, Basque pottery and wooden implements which would put a French housewife to shame. His guests, drinks in hand, stand about, get in the way and exclaim encouragingly at the delicious smell. The meal—"I aim at good, simple, French country cooking"—is one large course washed down with a rough red wine.

The English-stately-home type cook serves dinner in the drawing-room on a polished table gleaming with silver candles, bon-bon dishes and all the paraphernalia of gracious living. Dinner is very late because, after all, there is no butler, and cook has had to polish all the silver and lay the table after he returned from his office "in the city." His kitchen is a sanctuary and no one, especially female friends, may enter. "Go and get yourself a drink," he shouts; "I can't bear to be watched." But if he whispers seductively "Come in, darling. Could you keep an eye on the sauce?" a girl can reckon on a proposal after the coffee.

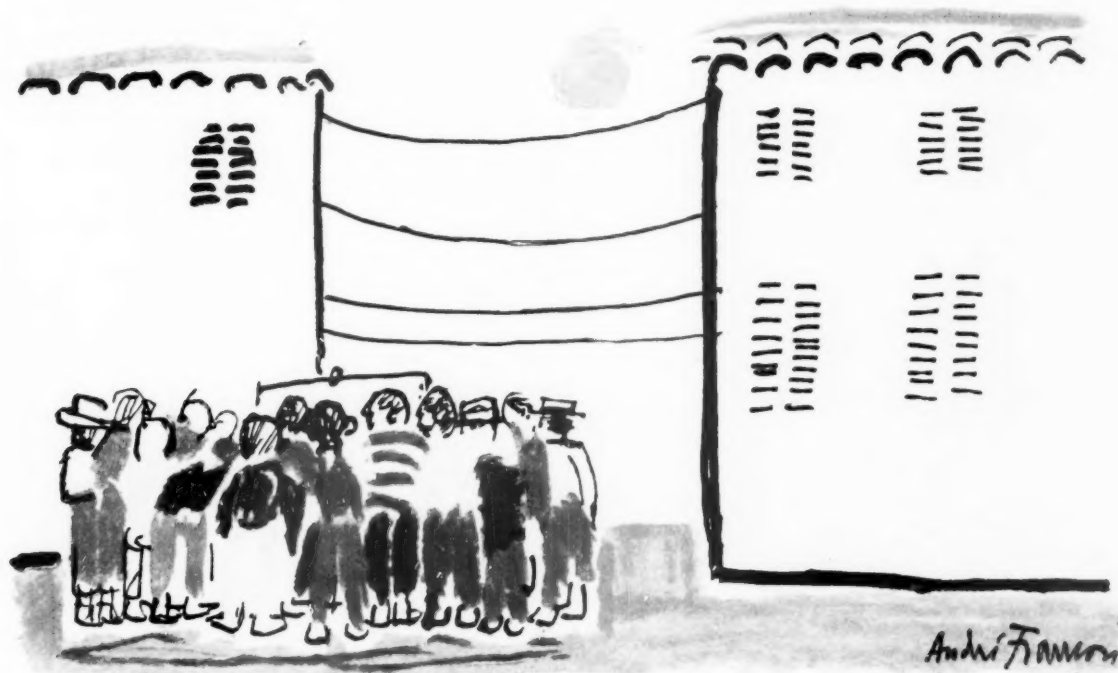
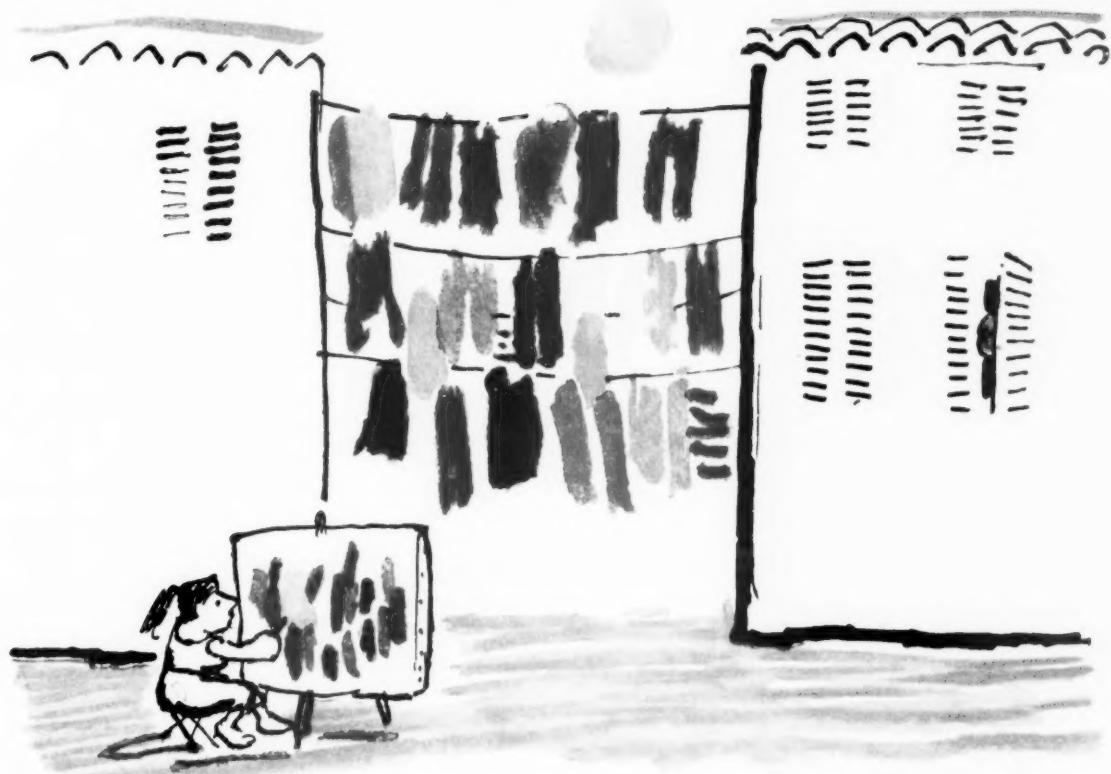
Once the food is prepared it is excellent, but there is no chance to relax and enjoy it. The cook demands excessive praise and appreciation. This is called for by his modest "Rather a flop, I'm afraid," as he proudly bears in a soufflé 12 inches high, or "Pretty slummy conditions here," as he serves caviar on a silver platter. The way to a man's heart these days is through his cooking, and a wise girl has learnt all the culinary gambits for table conversation. "Where *did* you get the dandelion leaves?" "Heavenly plates—Corsican?" "Did you fry it first, or afterwards?"

But praise alone is not enough. A good cook is a dictator. He knows how the food he has cooked should be eaten. "You CAN'T want mint sauce *and* red currant jelly," he protests, or quite simply, "I've already put salt in."

Gone are the days when a young man returned from abroad laden with Parisian belts, Spanish scarves and Italian woodwork to lay at the feet of his loved one. Now he arrives at the airport strung about with lettuce dryers, garlic crushers and wooden salad bowls. "So amusing," he cries. "Why can't I get all this in England?" There is not even a mention of a little brooch from Florence—Florence yielded only a wicker bread basket. His prizes from abroad lie about casually and conspicuously for months, in the hall, in the bathroom or on the piano.

It is fun to be fed, but any girl who thinks the fun continues into married life is in for a shock. Once married, the late cook about town won't even admit he can boil an egg.





André Francom



"Disgusting!"

Bacchus Bach

By GWYN THOMAS

AT the beginning of one of the most beautiful summers we have ever known in Meadow Prospect, Ogley Floyd, that ardent restrictionist and apostle of a pietism so narrow Ogley was almost sliced on his own blade, began his most serious campaign against the drink. Ogley himself had done a fair amount of drinking himself as a youth and had ploughed a small but rich field of carnality. He had had four brothers who carried wassail to a new high point between our hills before floating out of sight or retiring with eroded swallows. The oldest brother Granville Floyd, known as Granville the Grope for his very tentative way of following the pavement when he walked away from a session at "The Heart's Ease," his favourite tavern, went into a delirium, but he seemed to prefer the nightmare to the reality and he applied to the National Health to have his inward screen enlarged so that he could sit back and watch the unfolding terrors without strain. It was little wonder then that Ogley got malt and rye between the sights and flogged the wits out of them.

He went so far in his advocacy of a cautious thirst that there was a sharp reaction, for Ogley was only one of many things wrong with Meadow Prospect at the time. The long warm evenings of a scatheless July were against him for a start. The voters sitting around the square dreamed of beer-gardens full of blossoms, steins and violins which would be an improvement on the lowering ill-furnished stews in which the bulk of Meadow Prospect's drinking was done, with landlords leaning over the counter and staring at you as if wondering if they had stirred quite the right amount of white lead into your last gill.

Willie Silcox the Psyche, who was out to have all old inhibitions collected up by the Council ashmen with the other refuse, would stand in front of the little platform that Ogley had built for himself on the green patch that flanked our cinema, the Coliseum. Willie would butt in from time to time and give Ogley a list of other anomalies on this globe such as yaws, deserts, overwork and pit-dust, twice as bad as the drink,

that Ogley could well be lashing. But Ogley was nailed to that phobia for the season and could not be shaken off. One night Willie got up on the platform with Ogley and told the audience that Ogley was doing no more than running an outhouse of the main delirium then being tenanted by Ogley's brother Granville but that Granville seemed to be taking the thing in better part. Ogley threw Willie bodily off the platform and the debate became noisy and discontinuous as Ogley and Willie took turns at being half strangled on the floor.

The cinema manager, Luther Cann the Col, a foe to the gripping earnestness which was the division's prevailing wind, tried various tactics to get rid of Ogley from his pitch because he claimed that getting a headful of Ogley's doctrine before coming into the cinema put his customers into a thoughtful and critical vein and in a mood to reject as flippant most of the features screened by Luther Cann. The breweries got to hear of Ogley and sent him valentines with small time-bombs stitched into the tassels. As part of his general reply to the breweries Ogley also sent a note to Capone, who was responsible at the time for supplying the States with most of its illicit drink, urging Capone to

reconsider his whole attitude, and Capone had one of his slackest days trying to remember if he had any Welsh comedians on his mailing list.

Teilo Dew the Doom, one of our most active visionaries, claimed he had seen delight in one of the few visions that had contained any mention of this article walking about with plain finger-bruises on its throat and identifying Ogley as its assailant. Ogley at about that period had taken to coming up just behind voters who were leaving taverns, pensive and replete, and hooting into their ears, explaining that there were certain owls who did this to announce ruin and death. There were times when Ogley did not get half-way through his explanation because the voters, after the first shock, and angry that Ogley should be beating the tender planet with the holly of his concern, would land him a sharp one.

There was a meeting of the Discussion Group to consider Ogley. Willie Silcox urged that Ogley be regarded as the last and most deadly bacillus in the whole long infection of self-denial that had supplied us, as a people, with as dark a garland of erupting frustrations as any. He demanded that we move back a little



nearer to the ideal of sensible sensual release accepted by warmer and less-clothed lands. Willie was not prepared to labour the issue of clothes because he was a voter who felt the cold and thought that people looked better muffled up, but he claimed we could well have a more adventurous view of stimulants. He did not favour an extension of beer drinking, for he thought beer a little on the coarse side and prone to give the voters a sleepy and torpid look which would have slowed up the fastest saturnalia in ancient Rome, a manoeuvre of which we had been told by Paolo Tasso who kept the Coffee Tavern at the foot of Windy Way.

Wine, said Willie, was the thing, the very cordial of mellow worldliness and just the thing to mitigate the bouts of hysteria of our touchier divines. He demanded local vineyards along our terraced hillsides from which a brew could be prepared edged with the sad wisdom we had distilled from our years in the wet uplands. We were told by Nestor Harris, M.A., that the last vine ever to be grown anywhere near Meadow Prospect was torn up at the time of Boadicea's last defeat as part of the scorched Celt policy we had put on to put our fervour beyond doubt once and for all, and to permit the natives to mourn their degradation in total and terrible lucidity.

"Vegetable wine, then," said Willie, and the meeting smiled because everybody had heard of vegetables and the word had a nice, cool, undaring ring.

But even that was not altogether easy, for there were parts of Meadow Prospect where the sunshine is so ragged and the earth so carking that even

potatoes have to be grown under glass. However the cult got under way. There were wines from parsnip, turnip, beet-root, rhubarb. It became a craze in nine houses in ten.

When winter came most of the bottles had ripened. Glasses whirled of an evening. Speech thickened and slowed, which was not a bad thing in our part of the fringe where the universe has never really followed our style of speech. My father was a master at parsnip but was tempted into recklessness by his search for some climactic brew that would contain an answer to all the basic anxieties of this epoch. He had already blown out a square foot of the pantry wall with a too tightly corked jar of rhubarb that was fermenting as if it had a protest to make. My father insisted that the explosion had been set off from outside the pantry by Ogley Floyd the Flame, who had publicly stated that all pantries being used for wine-making should be destroyed and he had let himself be seen hanging about near the powder-house of the colliery trying the bolt and then returning into Meadow to nod at selected pantries.

But Ogley was out of town on the night of the explosion and we tried to explain to my father that it was his way of adding fecklessly to the yeast that caused the trouble. When the wine stood in its vats it fascinated him. A piece of toast would be floating on top to give the fermentation a point of focus, and it was wonderful to see the life crawling around the golden raft. Time and again, although warned by us that the wine was doing very well, he would nip downstairs and add a little more yeast. By morning the toast would be

whirling around the jar like a speed-boat on Windermere.

It was that very brew that set Ogley off the leash one Christmas Eve. We had persuaded Ogley to join our Male Voice Choir, the Orpheans, to see if the laying on of heavy harmonies would stabilize his impulses. He joined, stipulating that he would add his voice only when the libretto of the piece we were singing dealt singly with death or deprivation, and it was good to see him during our rendering of such an item as "The Jolly Roger" which stressed a love of rum and license. He would purse his lips so tightly he slowed down the vocal rate of the six singers next to him.

On that Christmas Eve the Orpheans, flanked by members of the Meadow Prospect Jubilee Band, shuffled out on their usual pilgrimage through the thin snow. The conductor of the Jubilee Band, Elmo Lucroft, was more imperious than usual, wearing a tall black fur cap that he had received from a cousin of his who was engaged in some missionary work in Alaska. To respect the associations of this hat Elmo had warned his bandsmen to take no drink before starting, and Ogley Floyd, among the second tenors of the Orpheans and holding a lantern, was overjoyed to see the bandsmen shiver and shake as their mouths came into contact with their frozen instruments, especially the euphonium player, a naturally chilly and doomed-looking voter, Bleddyn Bibey the Blast, who was surrounded by about a mile of cold pipe.

As part of our programme of chiding the life-force we stopped in front of the houses of the sick, the lonely and the

PERPETUUM MOBILE : *An attempt to replace the Brass Band in Procession by the Symphony Orchestra*



bereaved to take from the air the sting of their ache and loss. And at other houses we were invited in. We were all offered glasses of vegetable wine. Ogley stood aloof until he bombarded him with such cries as: "Only the wine from the fruit is wicked, Og. This stuff is made from such homely and trustworthy articles as parsnip and swede. Very harmless, though warming and tonic. All they do is take the chill off the stomach." Ogley took a sip, saying: "Just for the stomach, mark you. There is a touch of frost down there. I was pressed against a lamp-post when we did 'Holy Night' in that last street."

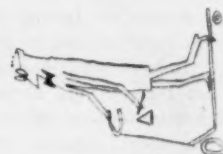
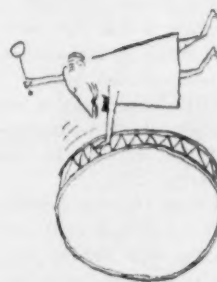
Ogley downed his first glass and became an enthusiast for the clean innocuous flavour of the stuff. He must have had a dozen helpings, winding up with that special parsnip of my father's which could have been used directly on quarry faces. We got back to Meadow Prospect square about eleven. Ogley's face was flushed and his eyes were blazing in a way that had that very touchy bass-drummer 'Teifion' Topliss the Tattoo keeping his sticks at the ready.

Then there was a low moaning from Ogley. At first we thought it was Bibey blowing away out of habit, but then we saw that Ogley's neuroses were drawing their long firm corks and his urges were casting aside their cowl with the loudest cheer since the last war's end. That very attractive woman Mrs. Felicity Foley the Frolic, who was an usherette in the Coliseum, came out of a side lane, and at the sight of her Ogley gave out some kind of jungle cry which we thought had been outlawed in the fringe after the first revival. He gave chase to Mrs. Foley, running like a stag but

leaving the pavement too often for real speed.

Mrs. Foley, whose legs had developed like steel after years of marching up and down aisles, outstripped him, and then Ogley started out in pursuit of two maidens who were coming home from a dance. Our policeman Leyshon the Law came into view just as Willie Silcox was assigning various members of the Orpheans to start galloping off into the roads that fed the square giving out cries of desire and slogans directed against the years of quietness and restraint, all to create bits of diversionary chaos in which we could get Ogley back to normal. Leyshon made a long statement in which he said he had always been certain that the radical flank of the Orpheans would one day try to discredit Christmas and denounce Claus as a charlatan who was trying to concentrate the species' lust for kindness into a single night and with his oblique approach from the roof to fox the voters who had had quite enough of misdirection. In the meantime we got hold of Ogley, held his head against the coldest wall in Meadow Prospect, read a series of chilling texts from the good Book and half drowned him in cocoa of the most austere tint made by Tasso while we got Theo Morgan the Monologue, that prince of reciters, to recite to him that fine temperance poem "There's a Lurching Shadow On The Blind To-night."

Ogley is now against vegetables, which puts the last stick in his fence of rejections because at least he would unbend over chips before. He is lashing out at allotment holders who have never been argued with until now and they are getting jumpy about it.



Boy Proposes

By R. G. G. PRICE

MY childhood was rendered complex and confused by my belief in the Victorian doctrine that Literature was a guide to conduct. By the age of eight I thought I had learnt that it was the duty of any young man brought face to face with a girl to woo her. My early life had been so cloistered that my first encounter with girls was at a private hotel in Wales. Hitherto I had known only "rooms" and my reading had ill-fitted me for communal life. It took me some days to get used to it; but the other people were elderly and I was beginning to adjust myself when I was horrified by the arrival of a family that included three gay and self-possessed girls. There they sat across the dining-room and I red-dened under the pressure of what I supposed the rest of the inhabitants were thinking.

I knew what the code demanded and, it was true, I had been drilled into doing worse things than linking myself with one of these attractive creatures. Compared with eating a hostess's sago with expressions of approval or writing letters of thanks on Boxing Day this branch of good manners was mild enough. Indeed, once I had forced myself out through my shyness and grabbed a mate I need never emerge again. She would protect me from any further claims of social life. Also, realizing that sooner or later my mother's powers would fail, I thought it would be quite a good thing to have a successor all lined up, so that there would be no gap during which my

clothes went unmended and my appetite unenticed.

Literature told me what to do but gave me no help in selection. In a rather happy-go-lucky way I simply picked the one I liked the look of best. Literature was, at least, emphatic on the importance of speed and decision, so, after the cheese, I rushed to my room to write the letter. It was very lucid:

DEAR MADAM,

Will you marry me? R.V.S.P.

Yours sincerely,

R. PRICE.

I delivered it by walking back into the dining-room and handing it to her with a frozen face. I left without waiting for comments as I felt she would need time.

In the morning she was very patient and responsible. Leading me to the river she told me that we should not be allowed to marry at once. This made me impatient and the hint of delaying actions by authority whetted my keenness. However, she convinced me that no tantrum would accelerate the banns and I trotted off with her to paddle quite happily. There is nothing like a proposal for breaking the ice.

Children are believed to suck dreams from fiction. My literary nourishment was sterner. I never idealized the girl

or my proposal. I had behaved with propriety, and what more could any writer want of his readers? When she went home I liked to feel that there was a girl booked for me in Droitwich and would blush in a proprietorial way if the town were mentioned. My parents feared that I was a girl-chaser and wondered what I should be like at eighteen. They need not have worried. I had paid my debt to society. I doubt if I wrote to her more than once. She was a nice girl, about fourteen and, I checked with my mother, freckled. She deserved a more active devotion; but I found writing difficult and to me letters were part of the duller side of life, not the kind of thing one associated with one's future wife.

I have never been to Droitwich, which the guide-book says has deposits of radioactive salt: I think I should like that. My girl probably left the spa long ago. She might be a leading variety act or a surgeon or a shrew. My wife tells me that she has never lived in Droitwich nor been proposed to in the Wye valley, so there is no hope that the episode has been neatly, if tardily, rounded off. I can only hope that the girl met somebody whose reaction to literature was romantic. She deserved to.

Drainpipe Music

Mr. Louis MacNeice, on holiday at the seaside, is incommoded by a sudden rain-storm.

IT'S no go the promenade, it's no go the deck-chair,
All we want is a merry-go-round and a ticket for the peep-show.
Our shirts are made of crêpe-de-chine, our sandals plastic-python,
Our macks are hanging in the hall beside the heads of bison.

It's no go the beauty queen, it's no go the chalet,
All we want is a cosy pub with a view of the tap-room telly.

It's no go the paddling-pool, it's no go the pierrots,
All we want is a packet of fags and a drink to drown our sorrows.

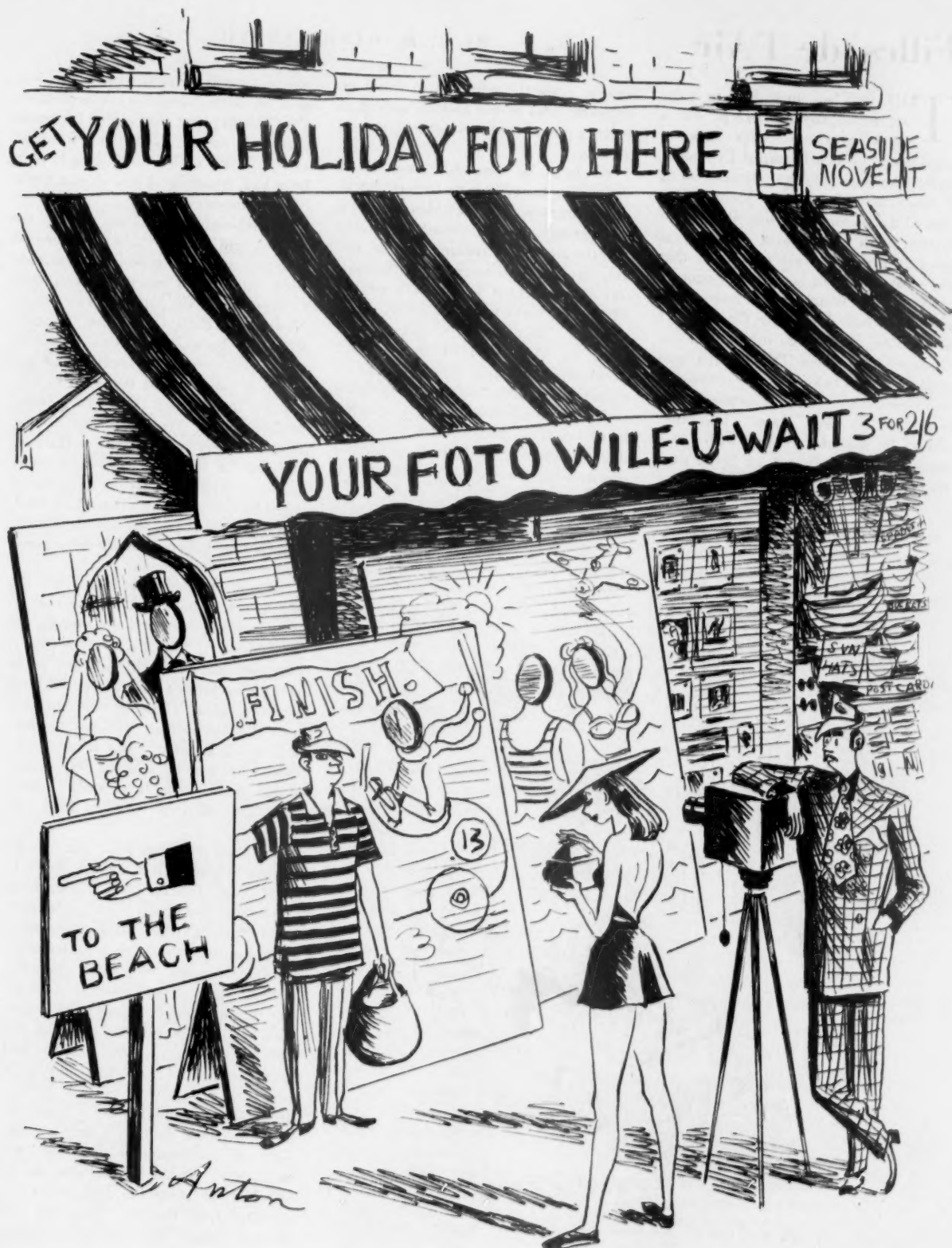
It's no go the Smugglers' Cave, it's no go the *Skylark*,
All we want is fish-and-chips and a penny for the juke-box.

It's no go my honey love, it's no go my poppet,
The wind is blowing nor'nor'west, confounding all the prophets.
The glass is falling hour by hour, the glass will fall for ever,
But if you break the —* glass you won't hold up the weather.

E. V. MILNER

*Beastly





Filles de l'Air

By C. H. GIBBS-SMITH

THE first lady in history to make an aerial voyage—except for a duck who can claim airborne precedence—was a beautiful Lyonnaise named Madame Thible. She took off in a superbly decorated Montgolfière named *Le Gustave* on June 4, 1784, at Lyons, with a Monsieur Fleurant as pilot, in order to prove once more that the weaker sex can be as courageous as the stronger. Watched by a fashionable multitude including King Gustave III of Sweden, after whom the balloon was christened, Madame Thible burst into song—possibly to keep up her courage—and chanted the aria *Je triomphe, je suis reine* from *La Belle Arsène*. The pilot, not to be outdone, replied with *Quoi, voyager dans les nuages*, an aerial duet which must have had its own peculiar

charm, since the pair had to stand on opposite sides of the balloon gallery to balance it, and could not set eyes on one another.

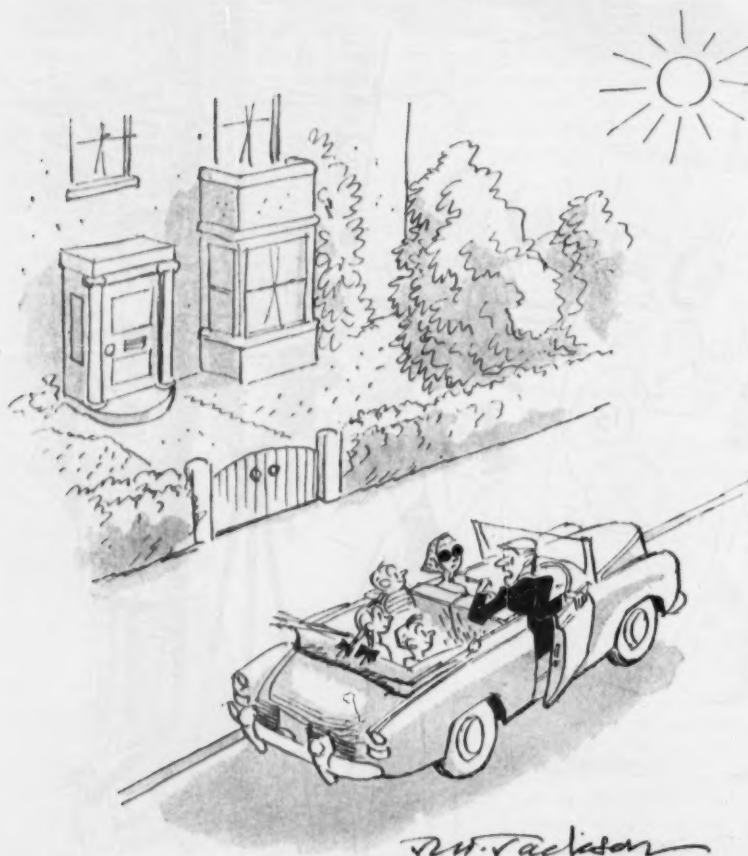
We must be somewhat fussy about definitions in ballooning history; so to avoid contradiction it should be admitted that women had *technically* ascended into the air before Madame Thible, but only in a *tethered* ascent—a rather low sort of achievement in aerostatic circles, where free flight is always taken as the criterion. But rise they did, four of them, on May 20, 1784, in a captive Montgolfière at Paris. They all went up together—a marchioness, two countesses and one mademoiselle—accompanied by two men to steady their nerves. The duck, by the way, had already made her proper voyage along with a cock and a

sheep, when a miniature menagerie was sent up from Versailles on September 19, 1783, to prove that animal life could survive in the air. They landed safely, except for the cock's wing being broken by a kick from the sheep, after a flight of eight minutes.

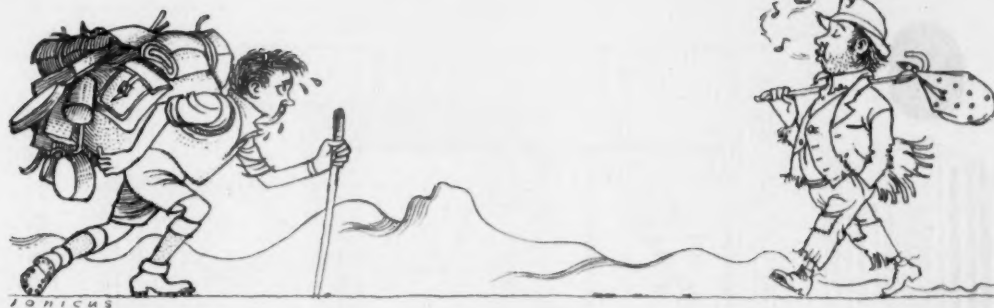
Englishwomen were not to lag far behind, and the first lady to fly in this country was the plumply handsome Mrs. Sage, who ascended with Mr. George Biggin on June 29, 1785, from Newington Butts; the pilot, Vincent Lunardi, having chivalrously stayed behind because the balloon would not lift three, and he did not wish to disappoint his guests. So off they went, neither having ever been up before. However, they landed safely at Harrow, but were at first menaced—with some reason—by an angry farmer; a situation saved by a sortie of boys from the school. The Harrovians put the farmer to rout, admired the balloon and the *emboupoint*, and retired with honour.

It was in the early years of the nineteenth century that women took to the alarming sport of descending in parachutes. The Frenchman A. J. Garnerin had made the first live parachute drop from a balloon in 1797, and his wife Jeanne-Geneviève became not only the first woman pilot but the first woman parachutist. But it was their niece Eliza who became the first professional *parachutiste*, and made nearly forty safe descents between 1815 and 1836.

It is sad to relate that one of the earliest airwomen met a tragic death in 1819. Wife of the famous J. P. Blanchard—who was first across the Channel with Dr. Jeffries in 1785—Madeleine-Sophie was the most famous of early professional women aeronauts. She was a plain but intrepid little person, with a neurotic fear of noise and of riding in carriages, who liked to ascend solo at night and stay up as long as the weather and ballast allowed. On the evening of July 6, 1819, she went up over Paris—to the accompaniment of a band—to give a firework display, a very popular form of entertainment in those, and later, days. As her balloon rose she let off a blaze of Bengal fire, and golden rain cascaded from the car. Next she sent down a "bomb" of silver rain swinging



"Now—are you all sure you've got your harpoon guns, goggles, oxygen bags, frogsfeet...?"



from a parachute. A moment later there was another burst of flame, but it was soon apparent that this was not part of the display. Madame Blanchard's balloon was on fire, ignited by the expanding hydrogen blowing off down the neck and reaching the "portfire" she used to light her fireworks. The blaze was almost extinguished by the downward rush of the balloon, but as it swept over No. 16 rue de Provence the frail car struck a stanchion on the roof and pitched Madame Blanchard into the street, where she was killed.

The next most famous tragedy was in the service of chivalry, when a misguided aeronaut named Thomas Harris invented a double balloon valve—one to open for slow descent and both together to empty the envelope on landing. Harris took up a young lady—Miss Stocks from the Haymarket Theatre—on May 24, 1824, and when over Beddington Park (near Croydon) accidentally pulled the wrong cord. Both valves opened, the balloon plunged down, and all seemed lost. But at the last moment Harris used himself as human ballast and jumped overboard to lighten the load. He was killed on the spot and the balloon crashed into an oak tree, only slightly injuring the lady.

Apart from George Sand's advocacy of the air, the middle of the century saw only desultory female activity in the sky. Madame Poitevin followed her husband's lead in the 'fifties by riding horses slung from balloons; some intrepid ballerinas—the *Filles de l'Air*—rose gracefully in aerostatic poses; and a certain Mademoiselle Desirée Purchois ("a somnambulist") took off with Monsieur Robère ("a magnetizer") for an experiment in "animal magnetism," which was a failure, perhaps mercifully.

Apart from frequent ascents for

amusement during this period, the only original rôle that woman performed in the air was that of bride, the first aerial marriage taking place in 1865—needless to say over New York. A contemporary print shows bride and groom, with registrar and matron of honour (all in traditional dress) accompanied by a bearded and top-hatted aeronaut, who nervously keeps a hand on the valve line.

Ducking in the sea was no new experience for male balloonists, but the first "lady in the drink" was Madame Duruof who took off from Calais on August 31, 1874, with her husband. Instead of sailing north to England, they drifted helplessly east, and had finally to ditch in the North Sea. After giving them up for lost, a delighted public on both sides of the Channel heard that an English fishing vessel, the *Grand Charge*, had picked up the couple in circumstances of extreme discomfort.

The *fin-de-siècle* ladies were not only good balloonists but also numbered amongst them some charming adventuresses, especially the parachutist Fräulein Käthe Paulus, who boldly leapt from balloons in bloomers and a sailor hat. It was she, incidentally, who later developed the first parachute for the German Air Force.

When the aeroplane finally arrived and came to stay in the early years of this century, air-minded womanhood was ready for the occasion and took to

the machines with ease, if not always with grace. As passengers they even had to preserve decency—as well as aerodynamic efficiency—by tying string round their skirts, while a few were content with bloomers and scarf-anchored hats. Much to the chagrin of the daring males—complete with knickerbockers and caps reversed—the women often made excellent pilots. To round off this chronicle it should be recorded that the first lady to ride in an aeroplane was Madame Thérèse Peltier, piloted by the great Léon Delagrangé, in July of 1908; and the first qualified lady pilot was the French Baroness de Laroche who received her *brevet de pilote* on March 8, 1910, so founding a brave new dynasty of *filles de l'air*.

To a Batsman Bowled First Ball

OUT? so quick, so clean an ending?
Oh that was right, lad, that was brave;
'Twas best not waste the time defending
The side you could not hope to save.

Fear no longer slip or cover,
Or the ball that moves away;
Get you gone: your reign is over,
No forgiving, no delay.

Now your debt to brighter cricket
Lies discharged, past fear and doubt;
Fading light and fiery wicket
Will not harm a man that's out.

Safe from silence, moil, and pother,
Watch the swerve and sudden break,
Where through tedious hours another
Makes the runs you scorned to make.

G. H. VALLINS



Hippomania

By JOHN BETJEMAN

IT'S for Regency now I'm enthusing
 So we've Regency stripes on the wall
 And—my dear, really fright'ly amusing—
 A dome of wax fruit in the hall.
 We've put the Van Gogh in the bathroom,
 Those sunflowers looked so out of date,
 But instead, as there's plenty of hearth room,
 Real ivy grows out of the grate.

And plants for indoors are the fashion—
 Or so the *News Chronicle* said—
 So I've ventured some housekeeping cash on
 A cactus which seems to be dead.
 An artist with whom we're acquainted
 Has stippled the dining room stove
 And the walls are alternately painted
 Off-yellow and festival mauve.



The Minister's made the decision
That Cedric's department must stay
So an O.B.E. (Civil Division)
Will shortly be coming his way.
To you, dear, and also to me, dear,
It's nothing, for you are a friend,
Not even if you and I see, dear,
A knighthood, perhaps, in the end.

But it wasn't for this that I fill'd a
Whole page up with gossip of course.
No: I'm dreadfully concerned for Matilda,
Who seems to believe she's a horse.
She neighs when we're sitting at table
And clutches a make-believe rein,
Her playroom she fancies a stable.
Do you think she is going insane?

I know I would not let them christen her—
Such an old superstition's absurd—
But when Cedric was reading *The Listener*
Before he tuned in to the Third,
She walked on all fours like a dumb thing
And nibbled my plants, I'm afraid.
Do you think we could exorcize something
If we called in the Church to our aid?

Ex-horse-ize—that's rather funny—
But it's not very funny to me
For I've spent all her grandmother's money
On analysis since she was three.
And just when we'd freed her libido
We went off to Venice and Rome
(You'll remember we met on the Lido)
And left dear Matilda at home.

I'm afraid that that Riding School did it,
The one where we sent her to stay;
Were she horse-mad before, then she hid it
Or her analyst kept it at bay.
But that capable woman in Surrey
Who seemed so reliable too,
Said "Leave her to me and don't worry,
This place is as good as the Zoo.



When she's not on a horse she's not idle;
She can muck out the stables and clean
Her anaffle and saddle and bridle
Till bed-time at seven-fifteen."
Twenty guineas a week was the price, dear,
For Matilda it may have been bliss,
But for us it is not very nice, dear,
To find it has left her like this.



Paris Picks the Winners

By A. V. DAVIS



THE bus to Longchamp was crowded. We were not the *beau monde* exactly, but my friend Monsieur Clarence was *en haut de forme gris*, complete with button-hole, and his wife was resplendent in autumn finery. Cars were streaming down the *Allée des Acacias*, the cascade was cascading over its artificial rocks and there was a sportive glint in every eye as we alighted near the pay kiosks and entered the paddock. It was the day of the *Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe*, the peak event of the racing year, with 25,000,000 francs and an *objet d'art* going to the first past the post, and 900,000,000 francs paid out in prize money to holders of winning tickets in the National Lottery.

The scene was *éblouissante*. Beautifully dressed racegoers were promenading under the chestnut trees, kissing acquaintances, admiring the domed flower beds and staring at the owners

and trainers in their little enclosure, fenced off like creatures in a zoo. Three tiny men with immense padded tweed jackets over their silks were in earnest conversation near the totalizer *tableau*. Four of Dior's mannequins were marching on the forbidden *Tapis Vert* to pose by the statue of *Gladiateur*, wonder horse who won our Triple Crown in 1865. The authenticity of the likeness is not guaranteed, the animal having died seventy-five years before the statue was erected.

The riders had not yet weighed out for the first race and the runners were still parading round the gravel paths, pushing through the throng. No rails protected them from the public as in England. Each horse was led by a middle-aged stable lad with another equally mature lad walking at the side. The jockeys were up, bending occasionally from a great height to shake hands with admirers. One big black horse was dancing sideways in nervous excitement, but the others seemed undismayed by the shrill

clamour of voices and sudden pats on glistening hindquarters.

For 600 francs we had excellent seats in the *Tribune*. In fact I discovered later that by mistake we had occupied seats reserved for the Minister of Agriculture's party. Across the track we could see the old windmill of the *Abbaye de Longchamp* shining in the sunshine against the yellowing green of the Bois. Between races we went down to the paddock to study our sports papers. We scrutinized the *Pronostics*, the *Rapports Probables* and the *Coups d'Œil*. We read of much-quoted horses who did not lack certain qualities, though what those qualities were we did not discover. We noted horses who had never figured in the best society. They obviously could not pull off the *Arc de Triomphe*.

"Do not remain indifferent to this notice," urged an adviser of hopeful turfists. "*Ma Méth. person... fruit de 30 années d'expér. et de recherch... Bénéf. inégalables... Ecr. avec 2 timb.*" We jotted down the name for future use.



At Longchamp no one ever says "What a day for the bookies!" There are no bookmakers and no tic-tac men pulling their ears and slapping themselves on the head; merely a few kind-hearted souls handing out pink slips giving the state of the betting. Money is wagered on the *Pari-Mutuel*, the transactions taking place in discreet little cottages with thatched roofs, hidden away among rose pergolas. It is so genteel one is surprised to see the ostrich plumes of Prince Malikoko—Monolulu to us—waving above the crowds.

For the sake of the old country I put my money on Eph Smith on Premonition and Lester Piggott on Zucchero. Monsieur fancied Silnet, a four-year-old whose chances were of the first order. Madame's horse was Buisson d'Or, who was addressing himself in very strong company. Palmer and Johnstone were riding; "Smeerk" and Elliott were on Shikampur and Janitor, and the Aga Khan's Nuccio had Poincelet up.

"Worden leads. *Il tient la corde!*" cried Monsieur, leaping on the seat in excitement. But Silnet and his half-sister La Sorellina were well placed and so were Buisson d'Or and Nuccio. It was anybody's race. As the horses approached the straight I was overjoyed to see Premonition nosing through from the rear, but in the desperate bunching and scrimmaging he was kicked and fell back. La Sorellina was the winner. She flashed past the post, beating Silnet by a head.

"*Aah, regardez donc!*" shrieked Madame, snatching the binoculars. "They dispute third place. It terminates in the photography." We rejoiced to learn that Buisson d'Or was fourth, a position which in France counts as a place. My horses came nowhere. They rested in the cabbages.

Like the majority of French punters, my friend Clarence does not usually frequent race-courses. He does his betting at a small café near the Gare de l'Est. The patron pulls a table to an open window and transforms the place into a branch office of the *Pari-Mutuel Urbain*, dealing briskly with the queue on the pavement outside. During racing hours there is always an eager crowd gathered round the teleprinter, watching the results jerked out on ticker tape.

Betting, Clarence tells me, is on the



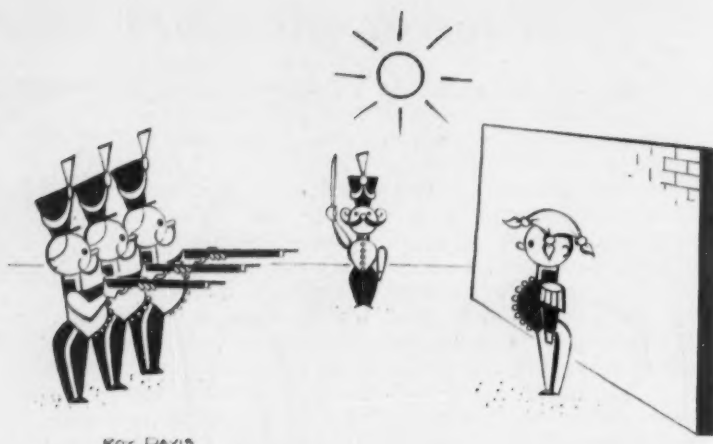
"I thought I told you to go to the optician's first."

increase. It has doubled itself in the last three years. And since 2 per cent of tote takings is given over to horse breeding, the annual benefit received is well above 800,000,000 francs. More money is wagered during the *Grande Semaine* in June than in any other week of the year. This is not surprising when it is remembered that important races take place every day, with the *Comité de Fêtes* putting on a breathless round of balls, revues, dog shows and *concours d'élégance féminine et automobile*, and adding considerably to the feeling of recklessness and dissipation. Enthusiastic betting occurs, too, in August, when the Paris tracks close down and

sportsmen in holiday mood travel north to Deauville's *Plage Fleurie*, but it is not until September, when the flat season opens at Longchamp, that racing ceases to be a social activity and becomes a serious business.

No student of form can afford to miss the *Royal Oak*, or the *Prix Vermille* for fillies, or the *Arc de Triomphe* with its fabulous purse made possible by the nation-wide response to the appeal "*Loterie Nationale. N'hésitez pas! Prenez votre billet.*"

In mid-October there is the *Prix du Conseil Municipal*, its weights and penalty allowances based on the "earnings" of each starter and its prize money



ROY DAVIS

put up, in part, by the city of Paris. A few days later comes the *Prix Gladiateur*, the longest and most boring race of the year, nearly four miles in distance.

"How lucky we are!" remarked Monsieur Clarence, adjusting a tawny fur on Madame's silken shoulders. "Our women know how to dress for the great occasion. Our race tracks are set in lovely surroundings. And we have

no fewer than eight *hippodromes* within easy reach of Paris."

At Le Tremblay the meetings are put on by the *Société de Sport de France*, the *Courses des Haies* at Auteuil and Enghien by the *Société de Steeplechases de France*, and the races *au Trot* at Vincennes by the *Société d'Encouragement à l'Élevage du Cheval Français*. At Maisons-Laffitte, St. Cloud and Enghien

flat racing is organized by the *Société Sportive d'Encouragement*, while at Longchamp and Chantilly the meetings are run by the *Société d'Encouragement pour l'Amélioration des Races de Chevaux en France*.

One may rest assured that racing in Paris is never likely to fail through lack of encouragement, in fact a ninth track has recently been opened at Senlis.

As a gay and colourful spectacle nothing rivals the *Grand Prix* at Longchamp in June, when the turf shimmers in the heat haze and perspiring gentlemen sit in top hats and shirt sleeves, fanning themselves with foolscap-sized race programmes. But for sheer enjoyment there is nothing to beat the *Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe* on a fresh October afternoon, when the first yellow tints of autumn fleck the chestnut trees and the finest bloodstock in the world competes for the largest purse in France. Nothing equals the moment when the starters break the ribbons and the cry goes up "*Les voilà partis!*"

"They're off!"

My Greengrocer

MY greengrocer lives in a dull brown
Bit of the town.

His place is

An oasis

With a fruit basis,

Some towers

Of flowers,

A ledge

With a hedge

Of veg

And a window which gets smudged with the morning
mist

And becomes like an improbable picture by a
post-impressionist.

His big moment is when the sunshine comes,

Wax-polishing his imported plums,

Dazzling the débutante frills

Of his daffodils,

Lighting up his undulating orange and lemon hills

And bringing a bit of a tinge to the cheeks

Of his salsify, celery, chicory, garlic and leeks.

Simultaneously, certain crepuscular background
shapes

Are suddenly sorted out into bunches of grapes

And cast a gentle amethystine gleam

Amid the sleek arcades of salad cream.

O gosh! Such glowing fruits as these

Were plucked, I trow, from golden trees

In haunts of the Hesperides

And fleetly to this region dark

Were wafted in an elfin bark—

Or have I overstepped the mark?

Be that as it may,

Hidden away

Inside,

Almost cut off by the billowing tide

Of boxes

And Coxes

And crates

And dates,

Busy for many an aromatic hour

In his island bower,

By his cave of cauliflower,

Or clambering over his grotto of greens

To his plateau of processed beans,

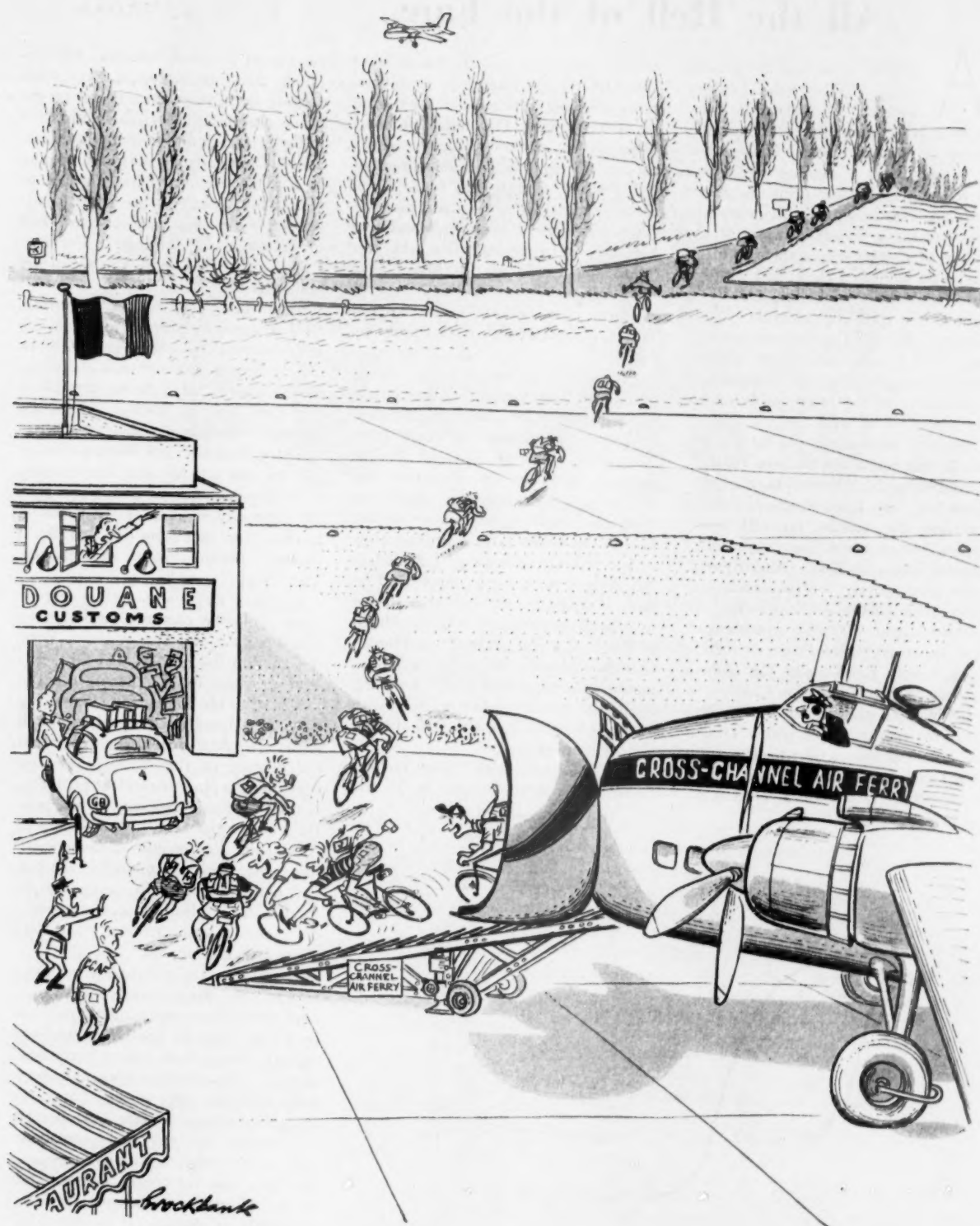
You will find my greengrocer;

Though except for saying "No, sir,

But we may be getting a few in next week,"

It is unusual to hear him speak.

DANIEL PETTIWARD





All the Hell of the Fair

By LORD KINROSS

A NOTICE at the fair-ground reads: "Twentieth Century Pastimes." And in the foreground, in the twentieth century manner, stands a man in chains. His head is in a sack, and a snarling companion is refusing his release until the public pays up. Nearby a man with an ape-like torso cracks a raw-hide whip at the public, challenges one of them to break stones on his naked chest, and with his bare hands tears books horizontally in two, to the discouragement of writers present. Members of the non-income-tax-paying groups, they insult us all in twentieth century language, complaining venomously of the unprofitable nature of "this class of work."

We drift away to the pea bar and the whelk stall, relics of a previous century, drink bottled beer, bottled burdock and dandelion, eat fish-and-chips from a travelling fish van, or toy with toffee apples, butter-scotch, humbugs, toffee bananas and candy floss. Alternatively, more progressively, we may suck Jusy Frute Lollies from a "Superseller" of ice-cream, enjoy the "silky smoothness" of a strawberry Softa Freez, or merely drink Lovely Fresh-made Tea from a Modern Mobile Coronation Café.

Behind us, streamlined and shining with Progress, are the caravans. Dream prefabs, ideal homes on wheels costing £3000 each, they have all the refinements: gas refrigerator, chromium,

indoor sanitation, and are drawn by a diesel tractor and fitted with pneumatic tyres, enabling tasty meals to be cooked on bottled gas at fifty miles an hour. Here gipsies, who are gipsies no longer though all genuine granddaughters of the genuine Gipsy Lee, foretell the future, each claiming to stand alone in "her own private business," and one boasting on a placard that she has "read the hands of the Mayor and Mayoress of Newcastle, the Mayor of Sheffield, the Oldest Twins in the World, and numerous other Important People."

Freaks are no longer born—except behind the Iron Curtain. There is still a good opening for a well-proportioned midget. (They used to come from Hungary.) But a National Health Service, proficient in obstetrics and discouraging malnutrition, denies us monsters. Never again may we see the Girl in the Spider's Web, without arms or legs or body, who sang "I Ain't Got No Body"; never again, maybe, a Pig-faced Woman in a sty, or even a Rector in a barrel; never again, with the March of Progress, a Human Seal or a Human Ostrich. Already, we notice, a "living mountain of Beautiful Girl," weighing thirty-six stone eight pounds with ninety-four-inch hips, sits alone in her tent, sadly neglected.

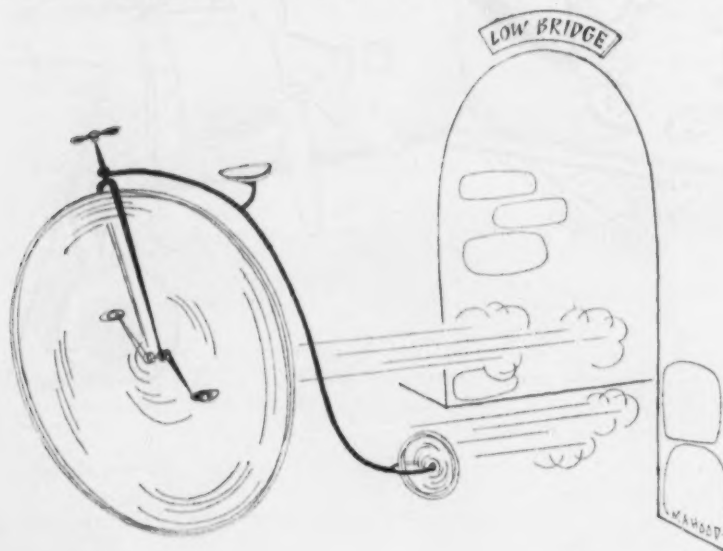
Men, however, with "arty inclinations" still take an interest in Nature

Studies of Feminine Charm. Electro-graph and Bioscope, in twentieth century form, show more to-day on the public screen than ever the Butler saw in the private boudoir. But Mutoscope and Butovue still offer peeps for a penny at Cupid's Secrets, Paris Playlets or Hollywood Scandals, in which half-dressed ladies half undress and half dress again. ("Lovable. Exciting. Reckless . . . The more you spend the more you see.")

Meanwhile Woman is inquiring, for her penny, about herself. Is she 100 per cent Tops or 0 per cent Zero, or merely betwixt and between, Amazing, Magnetic or Steady? In her love life is she Red Hot or Timid, or merely Bashful, Romantic or Naughty? "Sidney Knows," and for a penny in his slot will tell her that Opportunity Only Knocks Once, or that "You have the capability required to make life a success. Develop them (*sic*) and you'll succeed beyond your expectations. Think high."

But since this is a go-getting century more profitable pastimes predominate. More popular are Win-A-Choc, Win-A-Cig, Win-A-Chew, Win-A-Gift, All-Win (thanks to a "beautiful little machine" with non-corroding working parts in a bonderized metal case well coated with heat-treated enamel). It is the century of the Multiple Pay-out Machine: the pin-table and the pool tote; also, as Culture progresses, of the Juke Box, otherwise the "Coin-operated Automatic Pre-selector Phonograph" (complete with mammoth cash-box and non-cloggable coin chute, unique mechanical overload cut-out, no solenoids, no metal rectifier and no electrolytic condensers).

Pleasure to-day is as highly mechanized as war. Roundabouts and swings, once worked by a strong right arm, then by a pony, then by a steam-engine, are now all-electric, with a décor in the best of taste. Their baroque horses, dragons and gondolas are giving place to streamlined moon rockets, buzz-bombs and racing cars, and the roundabout itself to the Dodg'em, with its supercars, in which taste for speed, violence and dislike of one's neighbour may be innocently released. (It is especially popular with the drivers of taxis.) Of





what use is the switchback when man can wield the power of the joy-stick, showing off by shooting twenty feet above his fellows in a Dan Dare space-ship, or suspending himself, to their amazement, in a jet plane, upside-down?

Triumphs of precision engineering, these machines, made of high-tensile alloys, win admiration for their epicyclic gear-boxes, their unique method of floating transmission, and the "eye-arresting beauty of their line and finish." Even the surviving Bucking Bronco (coin-operated), with its life-like mechanical movement, is a fibre-glass horse, stove-enamelled, on an all-steel base.

Big Pleasure is thus to-day Big Business, to say nothing of Big Bureaucracy, with their well-known refining, civilizing influences. Gone from the fair-ground are the barkers, the touts and the hoodlums. Thanks to a National Amusement Council, showmen to-day have the dignified status of Amusement Caterers and Entertainment Providers. The pin-table saloon will soon be as suitable a resort for the young as the State day nursery. And the treasured ambition of the century will be realized—respectability in pleasure as in everything else.

Ballade of Whitaker's Almanack

JUNE is a cheerful month one would have said,
But on consulting Mr. Whitaker
I find to my surprise that he, instead,
Considers it a month when things occur
As solemn and as strange as ever were,
Like Waterloo and the moon's apogee;
While Mrs. Pankhurst, David Wilkie (Sir)
And Samuel Plimsoll d.

In June the placid sun strolls overhead,
Crowds down his blessing on the sunbather
Till both alike go crimsonly to bed.
The cliffs are quiet and the beaches purr.
A pollen-laden wind begins to stir,
Ignored by Mr. Whitaker as he
Jots down "The sun conjunct with Jupiter
And Samuel Plimsoll d."

"Mars will be visible all night, bright red."
But not to the belated traveller
Too busy dodging with a tactful tread
The lovers down the shadowed lanes. Demur
Who will, I think the almanographer
Leaves out a lot. "Frivolities," says he,
"But Mrs. Pankhurst, we must mention her,
And Samuel Plimsoll d."

Prince, upon second thoughts perhaps I err;
Facts after all are facts; summer may be
Just as illusory as ever (brr-r-rr)
But Samuel Plimsoll d. PETER DICKINSON



The Enchanted Park

By G. W. STONIER

CHIMBORAZO, Cotopaxi, avers the poet, had stolen his heart away. In my case it was Hyde Park. Peering out from a bus through the snow, I saw a gentleman on one of the park seats reading a newspaper. Look, I cried, look! Hyde Park, observed my father; and that explained it.

Especially as, in later years, I was warned against ever going there. Black railings protected me against the crocus and litter-strewn grass, swans' wings, tramps, horses, occasional gunfire or band music, the bowler-hatted stranger with a sweet tooth. Dogs went mad, boys drank deep of infected fountains, and cricket wasn't cricket—in Hyde Park. Somewhere even lurked Mr. Hyde. Several of my friends used to go there, and I knew them as damned irretrievably.

And when at last I did venture in, nothing more happened than that I tripped over a rail and was helped up by someone introducing himself as the King of Bohemia.

The charm still persists. I like to spend the day there, preferably a day when there's so much to do that one decides to do nothing. I'll lie in the grass, watch the clouds, listen to the traffic mutter. Something will turn up, if it's only sheep: such grimy sheep as haunt a West Riding moor. There will, mysteriously, be classical dancers in a dell. Policemen will shoot off on bicycles. Over a fisherman's shoulder I'll gaze into Serpentine waters (what woman would understand this?), join the talking groves at Marble Arch, walk anywhere.

Bewildering is the choice of things one can do—or others can. Ride, run, row, swim, play bowls, watch the cars

go by, read Grodzinsky or Mrs. Christie, peel one's socks off, contemplate the Albert Memorial (has it never been climbed?), take flowers to the dogs' cemetery or tar and feathers to Physical Energy, hold a jet-plane on a leash, loose a balloon, fly a kite, launch one's fancy on that Round Pond where once Shelley, sailing paper-boats, was seen plain.

In Hyde Park I include (as some may not) Kensington Gardens: all part of that stretch of country between Notting Hill and Whitehall traversed, morning and evening, by high officials walking to and from their high places. One of their ukases has recently torn down the elms along the Broad Walk, as though a freak storm had passed; and hundreds more may follow; if not, we're told, they will fall on us. However, these victims of elm disease or departmental fury will by their very absence continue to engross us. Hyde Park is much haunted. The Crystal Palace, that metropolitan fairy tale, glitters afar, with the incident of its opening when, in the middle of the "Hallelujah Chorus," a gorgeous Chinaman prostrated himself before the Queen. Room was quickly found for him between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Wellington, and so the procession moved off. Too late it was discovered that this Eastern luminary owned a junk on the Thames doing a brisk trade with visitors at a shilling a head.

There's a tug honking now. Perhaps I've imagined it. My thoughts seem to come back to boats (was it George III who staged a vast mimic battle on the Serpentine?) and my steps to the Round Pond. This regatta will last the whole summer, with gala days over week-ends.

Everything that floats has a place,

from match-boxes to the tall yacht that brushes aside battleships. A paddle-steamer encounters an up-ended duck. Motor-boats whirr by clippers and, suddenly quiet, re-enact the fable of tortoise and hare. Except on afternoons when not a ripple stirs and discomfited owners waggle sticks or throw pebbles, these are still days of sail.

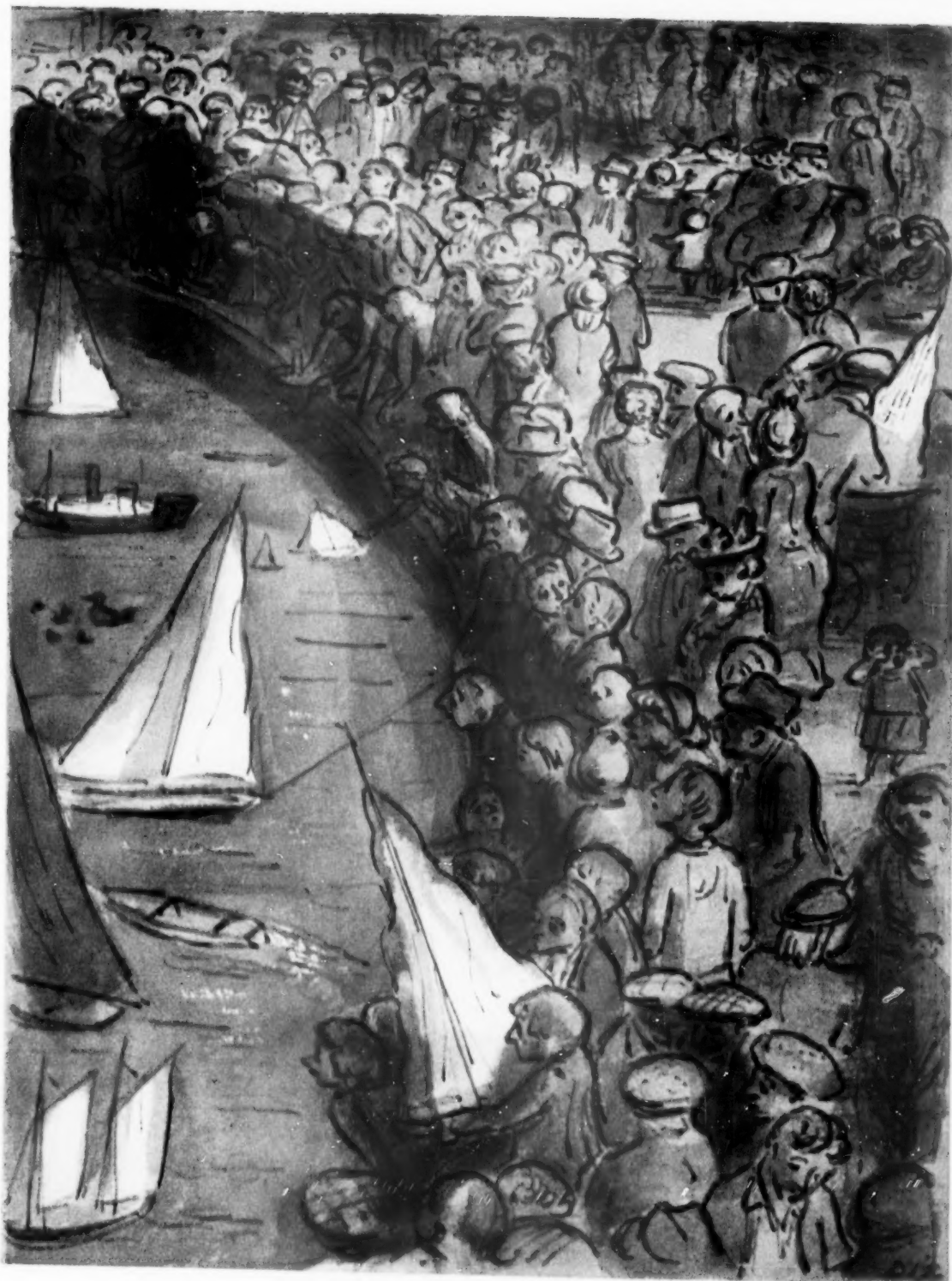
Then the sensation: a drone like a may-bug's, patter of feet, cries and coos, and there, where interest points, is the latest speed-boat performing prodigies. Not only, half out of water, can it make rings round every other craft there: it does, it makes rings. It sees ducks, and flies straight at them. It circles a swan, round and round, and that monumental bird is made a goose, like Falstaff in the forest.

From an excited urchin I pick up the magic words "radio-controlled speed-boat," and by pushing in I discover two pipe-smoking dons (so they seem) with a couple of boxes and a hand-dial. They surpass themselves in figures of eight, without a smile. But the faces round are worth watching. Some future Jutland or River Plate is being decided.

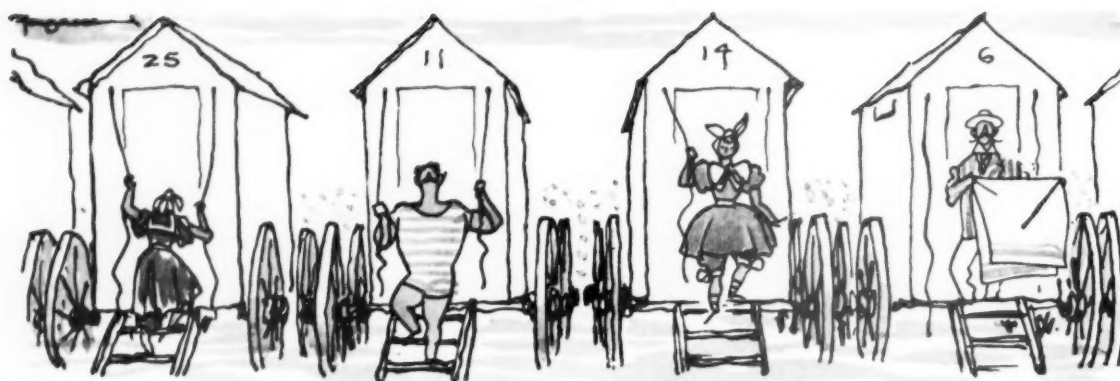
The solemn tweedy pair are young compared with others enjoying themselves in earlier ways. One frail old man acquires a demonic energy in deftly turning his ship when it threatens to land; then, angrily scattering children and infants, he runs off at top speed to meet his pride on the opposite shore.

There are, a little way off, quieter old men flying kites.

I know very well where this leads. On some distant birthday you will find me here; but in which rank—boatman or kite-man—time and eccentricity alone can decide.



Sunday morning by the Round Pond



I don't suppose our grandparents saw anything funny in those enormous bathing-machines they used to undress in—



and I don't suppose our parents saw anything funny in those little bijou bathing-huts that they used for the same purpose—



Well, after all, we don't see anything funny in sitting and struggling in and out of our clothes all over the open beach.

The Road to the Isles

By MARSHALL PUGH



THE guide books to Scottish summers can be disturbingly inadequate. They are so often written by the friends of the fey and the advocates of the oil lamp, gaily sprinkling bog myrtle through the pages of their reports and listening for the calling of the seals. Here, in the interests of fair play, are some more facts on the Road to the Isles.

There is no motoring road "by Tummel and Loch Rannoch and Lochaber." The road ends abruptly in a peat bog at Rannoch Station. Lochaber is thirty-five crow miles away, across a meaningless moor. From Rannoch, the ragged teeth of Glencoe can be seen, grinning away at any motorist bogged down at Rannoch Station, any motorist who forgot to check his map.

One stretch of the Road to the Isles can be attempted by road. "It's by Shiel water that the track is to the west, by Ailort and by Morar to the sea." No one will ever motor on it and forget it. That last forty-eight-mile-long stretch is under repair. It has been under repair for the last thirty years. For twenty years the road was prohibited to vehicles with loads of more than three tons. For twenty years ten-ton loaded fish lorries used it, honking as they passed the weight prohibition signs. A recent test case made by the police ended with the fish lorry driver being discharged absolutely. Fish lorries roll along untroubled. The prohibition signs are falling down.

The Automobile Association, with their customary tact, state: *Road narrow, winding and hilly with many blind corners. Care required.* They do not recommend nervous passengers to try for themselves.

The last five-ton lorry which came off the road on a slope was found in three pieces down on the loch shore. A lady who developed wheel wobble on Glenfinnan hill has never driven since. On that stretch, in a pre-war twelve-horse coupé (G.B. and bar), I was uncomfortably reminded of a ping-pong ball bouncing on a corrugated iron roof.

Fred Macdonald, the roadman at Loch Eilt, constantly reminds road users of the fish lorry which ended at the

bottom of Loch Eilt. "And it's fresh water there," said Fred, "no good for his load of herring." Macdonald fills in two hundred potholes each year. He personally witnesses six accidents each year. His motor cycle recently overturned. "I might," said Fred, "have been an object for life. When the summer brings the tourists and a car on every corner, you're better to drive with your boot on the brake. A French car had a nasty smash. I had to collect evidence. I remember the address fine—13, the Boulevard, Paris."

He was standing by his caravan, on the edge of the road. He blew a melancholy blast on his accordion. When the blast had heeled and toed it up the hillside, Fred said "They began to build a new road just before the war. It would have been a grand road if it had ever been finished."

None but the faint of heart should let the road conditions prevent them making the journey. This is a road rich in scenery, richer still in men of character. The Fort William end of the road is owned by a cattle rancher from Canada. His name is Joseph William Hobbs. He wears a large hat and has taught local crofters to follow cattle on horseback on his twenty-one square miles. All his barns are painted in bright yellow with the sign GREAT GLEN CATTLE RANCH in bawdy black. He lives in a castle by the edge of the Road, at Inverloch. History has it that one thousand five hundred Campbells were slaughtered at Inverloch for spoiling the braes of Lochaber.

"That's right," said Mr. Hobbs, "the battlefield is just by my gas-filling station, and there are another lot of historical characters buried in my shrubbery."

Mr. Hobbs is concerned about the future of the Road to the Isles. He hopes to establish drive-in motels along it. As he said, "We live in a forgotten part of Britain, and we are a forgotten people. This is the most undeveloped part of the Empire close to the

markets. All we have to do is to level the ground, roll off the rocks, fill up the holes and get rid of the heather."

As he talked Mr. Hobbs looked up at Ben Nevis. Mr. Hobbs was smiling. Ben Nevis was not.

Five miles farther on lies Loch Eil which the Camerons left to follow Prince Charlie. Returning Camerons would find flaking prefabs on the shores occupied by aluminium workers from Fort William. The present chieftain, Sir Donald Cameron of Locheil, has worked as a chartered accountant in London. The next stop is at Glenfinnan, where the Standard was raised for Prince Charlie. Traditionally the clans gathered on the loch shore, in front of the tea and postcard shop. No doubt there was more space at the time. The ground is no longer roomy enough to allow six Wolf Cubs to manoeuvre. Glenfinnan sings a sad lament for the bare-footed men with naked claymores. There, too, the station-master raises greyhounds for White City and Powderhall stadiums. The roadman, John Ford, is an Englishman and an enthusiastic amateur Shakespearean actor. He learns his lines by the side of the road and practises



dramatic gestures with his shovel. His costume for Macbeth, chain-mail from silver-painted hessian, has often stopped the traffic.

Certain traditions of the Road are dying. Poaching, for instance. In war time the Home Guard rifle was an excellent provider. The gamekeepers looked after the vermin and let the poachers look after themselves. With the local men poaching was not so much a crime as a state of mind. They felt that they had more right to the riches of the hill than the lairds who shot infrequently, badly, and on a full stomach. The Bible teaches, the poachers said, that animals are meant for man and not man for the animals. The only poacher I met showed the changing ways by insisting on remaining anonymous. He said "There was a time when, with a pot of tatties and a stag lifted off the hill in daylight, you were that happy that you

would smile at a hoodie crawl. But these poaching gangs from the south have ruined it . . . and the butchers of the Great Glen aren't paying the same price for suspicious venison, I'm sure."

Supplies for the seafaring men of Soay have stopped rolling along the road, depriving the locals of much of their entertainment. Soay is an island, just beyond the end of the road. It is two miles at its widest and three miles long, a barren place with a jungle of history. There were countless supplies for Soay until last June. The *Glasgow Herald* commented: "Soay constituted an object lesson on the moral effect of teaching robust islanders to rely upon National Insurance as a means of livelihood."

The islanders were even supplied, at our expense, with a mail boat. One night some Soay seafarers set out in that

mail boat, from the mainland, in the dusk. The mainlanders entreated them to wait until the moon was up and riding high and full with hardly a splash of cloud across its bow. The senior Soay seafarer produced a torch and said that he had a moon of his own. In the harbour the mail boat caught fire, the hardy islanders were rescued. Normal steamer mail services were resumed.

By the winter of last year Soay was becoming an expensive luxury which the country could ill afford. Virgin grass was growing on the Soay crofts, the lobster creels were empty. The islanders were unwilling to work, unable to eat scenery or gorge themselves on sentiment. Then a lady called Janet Geddes, educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and a former Ealing boarding-house keeper, bought the island. With her husband Tex and her son Duncan she occupied a house which the islanders considered to be reserved for visiting ministers, known to Soay as the "missionaries." The islanders objected to the new owner taking over the "Mission House." Sandy Campbell, the island spokesman asked: "What missionary could share the Mission House with people who treat the Sabbath as if it were a day of the week?" The islanders decided to leave. They were evacuated at public expense in June. Mrs. Geddes was inundated by applications from English people who wanted to come and live in the places of the twenty-seven Soay islanders. An Army officer wanted to run Highland ponies and cattle on the island. A lady from the South Coast wanted to buy the island and flood it, to test a drainage scheme she had devised. A Brighton Shakespeare group wanted to settle there and play the mainland villages of Knoydart and Kintail. The group leader wrote: "Perhaps the thought of the Gaelic mists has clouded our judgment but . . ."

The evacuation, which began as a Highland lament, became more and more like a befuddled eightsome as time went on. Without the Soay men, the original Soay men, the Road to the Isles can never be the same. Most of all, the locals will miss the picturesque insults that they used for one another. "As two-faced as a cod" was the favourite phrase. Even now, many of the old Highland men and the old Highland ways remain. Some of the



barns, well off the road, still have a piece of red cloth at their doors. This is a charm against the witches. In the old days, I'm thinking—and I'm not far wrong—a witch without red tape to repel her was liable to come into the barn, put a milk pail under a cow's tail and pretend to milk the cow's tail. Nothing was more liable to make a cow milkless and moody.

The Road, and the railway that runs beside it, still bring the Commissioner's men from the Lighthouse Commission, sternly checking up on any reports of wild orgies on the more isolated lighthouses, bobbing out there like petrels in the Atlantic. The work of the Commissioner's men is harder now that the lighthouse men are firmly organized by the Transport and General Workers' Union. Improvements the Union have brought. They insisted that one little station on the end of the Road should have a supply of fresh milk. It's an awful business, the eating, on a lighthouse.

From the little station, a junior keeper was sent to scour the area for a nanny goat. "Run your hand down its back," said the keeper, "feel its udder, pretending you know something about it . . . and pay no more than three pounds." The goat was bought, a billy goat besides. Milk was provided until the goats passed quietly away from malnutrition. As the head lighthouse keeper said, they had been living on the best of everything, proving that lighthouse men have stronger constitutions than goats.

It would be churlish to pass over the railway, running by the Road. First-class passengers have been known to complain that the third-class accommodation is, if anything, superior. There is no truth in the scandalous rumour that the fireman throws out coal to all his crofting friends along the Road. But the rail traveller misses the sweep of Loch nan Uamh, the loch of caves. Prince Charlie slept in every one of them.

He misses the silver sands of Arisaig. He misses that feeling of triumph that the motorist has when he reaches the end of the Road to the Isles.

The Road ends at the fishing port of Mallaig, where so many of the trawlermen speak with the West Highland lilt of Hull and Grimsby. A quick glance at Mallaig will make the casual visitor wonder if they have brought Hull and

Grimsby with them. The bars, of course, are authentically Scottish. By some eerie combination of the police, the licensing authorities and the low churches, all public bars in the Highlands have been made the same. There is no singing. No dancing is allowed. Darts are barred, lest the more jovial customers throw them at one another. The drinking is taken seriously.

The last few hundred yards of the Road to the Isles must be covered on foot. They are owned by British Railways. Shunting yards and piers squat across the bay. On foot you can reach the very tip of the Road, in a tumble of huts where the fish-gutting girls live. This extremity is locally known as Chinatown. You've never smelt the tangle of the isles there. The smell and smoke of kipper curing is stronger.

Farewell, then, to the Road to the Isles with a last chorus of breaking car springs.

The Scottish Tourist Board will, I trust, reprint this in booklet form.

Lawn Sweepers

LAWN like a moorland—the young sward caking,
Tangled and coarse the weed—
Plantain and yarrow are ripe for a raking,
Hawkweed and pearlwort breed.
Mine's a mortifying fairway,
Torn and matted in a skein:
Root up timothy, dandelion, ranunculus,
cocksfoot and daisy chain.

F. L. M.





"That's wheat!!!"

The Ancient Captain

By J. MACLAREN-ROSS

I WONDER how many of our literary critics are familiar with the work of José Moselli. It is true that this admirable author (so well known, thirty years ago, to Frenchmen of my generation) confined himself solely to writing stories for boys; but now that new evaluations of Henty and Haggard, or sociological analyses of fictional school-boys, have become both fashionable and popular, a serious essay on the Art of Moselli might help to initiate an entirely new trend.

Here, however, I can produce no more than a rough outline-map of this uncharted terrain, leaving the task of fuller exploration to those passionately devout Francophiles whose preference for the Gallic phrase is responsible for the almost exclusive use of italic type in the book-columns of our cultural reviews.

When I was a boy of thirteen, at school in the south of France, M. Moselli's stories used to appear, serially, in a paper called *L'Intrépide*: he was a regular contributor, and the only one whose name I can recall. My classmates ("comrades" was the correct word to use, though we were not Communistically inclined) were equally under his spell; we formed a José Moselli club. Every Thursday, when the words "*à suivre*," printed at the end of each episode, had been reached, heated discussions took place concerning the story itself, the course which it might take, and the probable fate of the characters in the next instalment. There was the Lord of the Lightning (*Maitre de la Foudre*), a Japanese who, from his headquarters in Tibet, had perfected, with a view to world domination, a disintegrating ray known—owing to the effect on its victims—as *la pourriture liquide*; *L'Homme à la Carabine*, whose exploits among the trappers and Indians of North America were perhaps the most popular among our least sophisticated members (one named his pet ant after him, but it died); and *Alain-Tête-de-Fer* who, owing to an accident in childhood, was provided with an iron plate in his skull, which afforded complete protection against the assaults of his enemies (none of whom thought of shooting him in the stomach). I myself preferred *L'Idole Bleue*: a pagan image

carved from a solid block of sapphire, set in the face of an unscalable cliff and worshipped by cannibals; an English criminal named Peter Bald, in the course of his flight from a penal settlement nearby, landed on the coast of New Guinea, narrowly missed being sacrificed to the idol, and thereafter coveted this colossally valuable item to the exclusion of all else: quite how he proposed to remove it from the sacred niche I'm afraid I don't remember.

Other stories by this author were published in monthly parts by the *Collection du Roman d'Aventures*, a series of pocket-size, paper-bound books priced at forty centimes; and the length of the total work must have been

prodigious: one of the previous titles (which I was never, unfortunately, able to obtain), advertised among others on the inside cover, ran into thirteen or fourteen issues, each of which, printed in double columns, must have contained at least twenty thousand words. M. Moselli also wrote under the name of Jacques Mahan, but certain mannerisms of style and recurrent features betrayed him immediately to his admirers: for instance, explorers, ambushed by hostile natives in the submarine twilight of some tropical forest, were invariably enmeshed in a net of lianas and dragged like landed fish before the witch-doctor (usually described as a *shaman*); the villains, following the pattern of



Peter Bald, were frequently convicts on the run from Nouméa, New Caledonia (they sometimes escaped from Guiana, but less frequently); and either the chief villain or principal hero—occasionally both—had at some previous time held a Master Mariner's Certificate: this, of course, together with the expert knowledge of seamanship that naturally accompanied it, came in extremely handy for navigating the various brigs, barques and schooners which formed a means of transport to the main spheres of action. In such cases the former rank of the character, coupled with the name of the vessel he had commanded, was often substituted for his own name during dialogue exchanges: Bald's terse locutions, for example, were often attributed to "*l'ancien capitaine du Cormorant*" (it may have been the scuttling of this ship, in French waters and with all hands aboard, for the sake of the insurance, that earned him his sojourn in the prison colony).

The basic material of the stories was, as we have seen, not dissimilar to that used by writers for juvenile markets elsewhere; what I think attracted me was the bold characterization and a realistic approach rare in this type of fiction: Moselli never made, like his British confrères, the mistake of involving in the action a number of adolescents who would have been, in real life, manifestly unable to stand up to the rigours in store for them; his protagonists were all adult, and when a young Frenchman was abruptly pitch-forked into perils among which he, alone, might have succumbed,

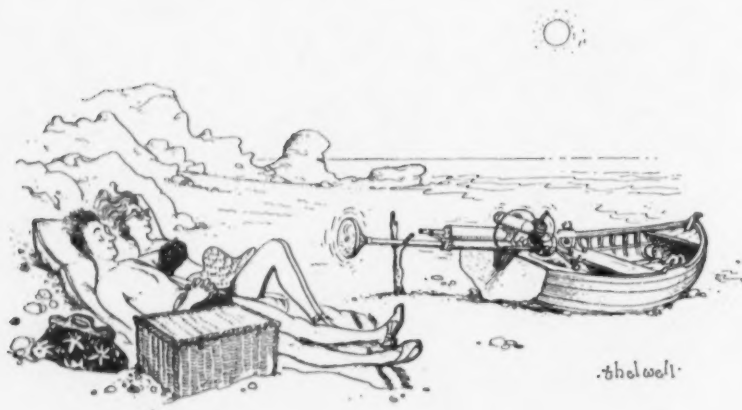
a more experienced adventurer was always at hand to help him. This latter was often of British nationality, for M. Moselli was a firm believer in an Anglo-French alliance: though the perfidious Peter Bald was an Englishman, he was given a French accomplice of equal ruthlessness to offset him; the author, too, must have had some knowledge of our language, for any English idiom in the dialogue was scrupulously accurate: "*Tu as envie qu'on te haze, espèce de Sea-lawyer*" is a phrase I especially recall, addressed by a brutal skipper to a shanghaied member of his crew. The author was apparently less in favour of Germans, his bad-men often belonging to the master-race: Max Blozer, who posed as a Dutchman from Batavia and whose gurgling laugh, seldom heard, struck terror into all around; Conrad Zerst, who had lost all his hair in a fire and whose bald, vulpine head was an outstanding feature of *L'Intrépide's* illustrations; and Johann Krapfl, two metres in height (I make this six feet seven), the villain of what was undoubtedly Moselli's masterpiece, *Les Mystères de la Mer de Corail*. Here the prize was a Chinese junk, down in Davy Jones's Locker at the bottom of the coral sea, but laden with a cargo of jewels and priceless jade originally intended as a tribute to a powerful Tong called The Friends of Heaven and of Earth. The hero, Captain Mortimer, accompanied by his French ally François Bontemps, was taken prisoner by Krapfl and ordered to divulge the junk's whereabouts. Since Mortimer refused, he was

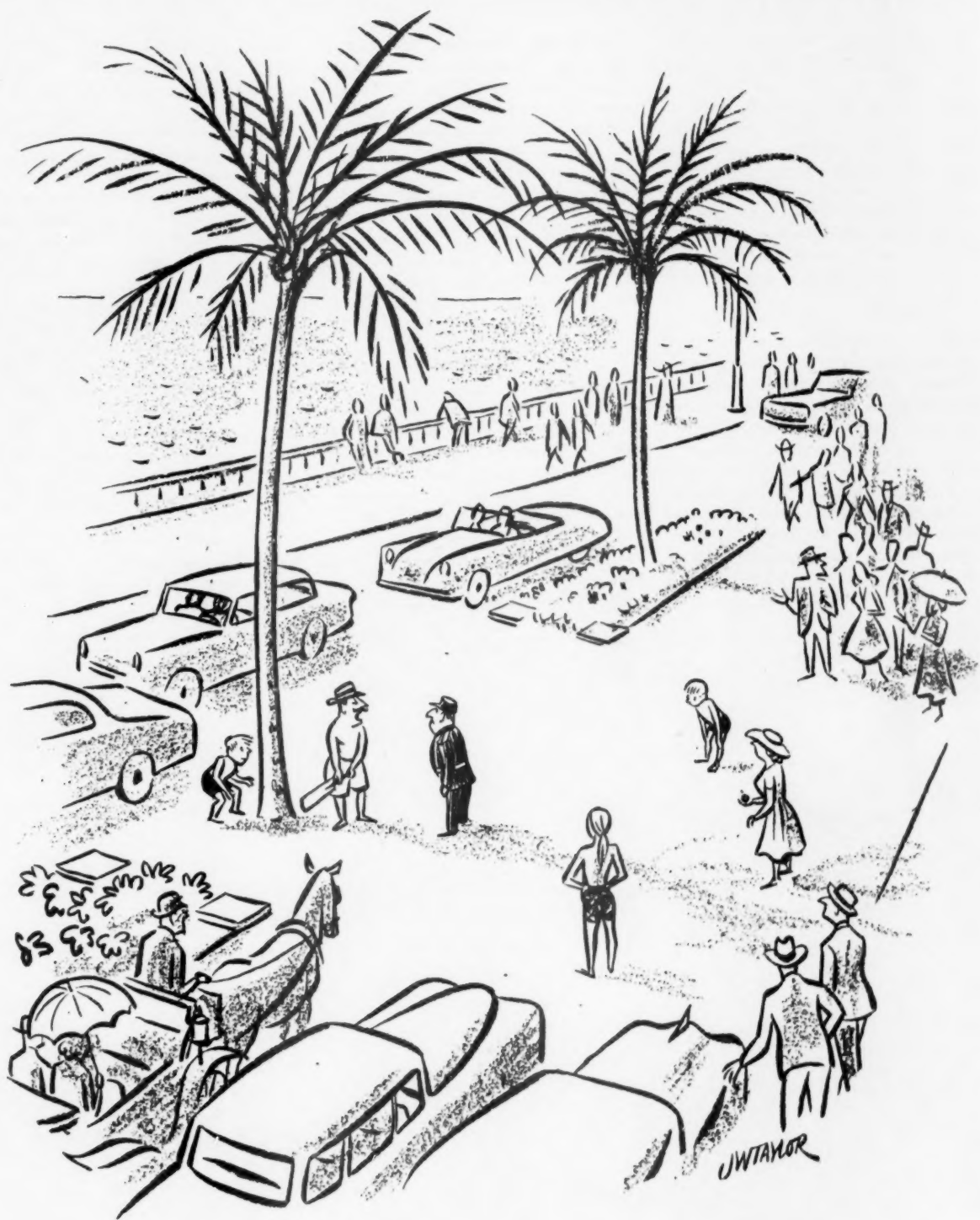
lashed to a mast while Krapfl filed his teeth to the gums with an enormous rasp. Though Mortimer remained steadfastly silent and was rescued before more tortures could be applied to him, he was forced to go through the rest of the story with no top teeth, as it was impossible, we were told, to fit him with an artificial set until his gums had healed and the roots could be extracted (the realistic approach I mentioned earlier). There was more realism to come. The scene then shifted to the streets of San Francisco, where members of the Tong (proving less benevolent than the name of their society implied, where claimants to their treasure were concerned) made attempts, impartially, on the lives of both parties.

Then François was kidnapped by Krapfl's henchmen, and the two-metre Teuton was, in his turn, captured by Mortimer. The Captain knew Krapfl's one secret fear—blindness. He threatened (perhaps remembering the loss of his upper teeth) to cut the optic nerve unless François were immediately released. Krapfl capitulated and the Frenchman was set free once more. The story raced towards its conclusion: a triangular sea-fight between the Tong men, Krapfl's gang, and the heroes—all on newly-equipped vessels. The Tong men were scuppered and went down to join their treasure. Krapfl was shot in the head by Mortimer and, deprived of their leader, his men surrendered. Mortimer and François boarded the enemy vessel and bent over Krapfl's body. A last ingenious twist: he isn't dead! Mortimer's bullet, though aimed to kill, had instead severed the optic nerve: the fate Krapfl dreaded most had overtaken him: he would live out the rest of his days in everlasting darkness.

From the foregoing, prospective students of M. Moselli's work will see that a variety of conclusions may be reached: Freudian symbolism? A microcosm of the world situation? I leave the interpretation to them: for my part I would like to echo, in respect of this author, the words with which the members of a beleaguered British garrison, delivered from danger by one of his resourceful heroes, expressed their gratitude: "Come, my friends! Three cheers for the gallant Frenchman!"*

*En anglais dans le texte.





"Dammit, c'est la Promenade des Anglais, n'est-ce pas?"

Inexpressible Ghastliness

By JOCELYN BROOKE

I HAVE an insatiable passion for guide-books: I love them inclusively and uncritically — Baedeker or Betjeman, Murray or Michelin, they are all grist to my mill. Most addicts, however, have their favourites, and my own speciality in the genre is the kind of "local" guide which one comes across in the remoter foreign beauty-spots—the kind, I mean, which is written in English (or something not unlike it) for the benefit of the Anglo-Saxon tourist.

So far as my own experience goes, the happiest hunting-grounds are in Southern Italy and Sicily, and I have myself, in recent years, collected a number of veritable gems (I am slipping already, you notice, into the appropriate idiom). One of my more prized possessions, for instance, is a small guide to Taormina, by Francesco Bucalo, which I warmly recommend to connoisseurs. After an erudite sketch of the town's history, Signor Bucalo, in his concluding pages, strikes a more modern and more emotive note:

"Countless splendid hotels, providing every modern comfort, deck the delicious Parnassus of Tauro. On the faces of those who have the good fortune to alight there, breaks forth the joy accompanying the realization of a long-nurtured desire." There is something in Taormina for everybody—for the student who "scrutinizes the vestiges of the past, seeking to recapture the hidden (*sic*) vitality of antiquity," or for the mere "plump idler" who, as Signor Bucalo sympathetically records, "basks serenely in the flowery meadows of the fertile countryside."

"In such a delightful atmosphere" (he perorates) "the noble and illustrious city of Pomponious Mela and Solinus, mindful of its triumphs, goes forward eager to recapture the pinnacles of the past"—an Einsteinian attitude of mind which does credit to the progressive outlook of the Taorminesi.

Then, too, there was the Souvenir Programme of the Contemporary Music Festival held at Palermo in 1949, in which synopses were provided, in four

languages, of each work to be performed. From an embarrassment of riches I select a fragment describing the last act of Casella's opera *La Favola d'Orfeo* (Eurydice has been "snatched back into Hell by the underworld guardians"):

"What can Orpheus do!? He will proclaim his immense bereavement and sorrow and will swear and promise that he will no more love a Woman! Nay, he won't allow anyone or that anyone speak of women to him!

"But the rath of the Baccantes reacts at the contemptuous repulse and despicable proposal of feminine love!

"They very agitatingly and vividly swarm and invest the scenes, provide themselves with javelins . . . and fiercely run and threaten the blasphemer. They behead him and bear Orpheus' hoad triumphantly and after having dismembered his limbs, they offer it to their God: Baccus.

"Now they raise their hymns to this Deity and dance and inebriate thems elves until they fall exhausted to the ground.



"The rumpus of the Baccanale attenuates and even slowly dies out in a long Chorus closed-mouth murmur."

Those inebriated elves must have been worth seeing.

My most rewarding *trouville*, however, was the little guide to the catacombs of the Cappuccini at Palermo. It is a mere opusculum of ten pages; but seldom can so many riches have been crammed into so small a space. The pamphlet is entitled "The Great Sepulture of the Cappuccini," and is well worth the hundred lire which one pays for it.

"From an artistic point of view, the convent is an uninteresting building," writes the anonymous author, with a becoming modesty. Soon, however, his enthusiasm is kindled: "Its speciality is the curious cemetery in its subterranean. A weird spectacle indeed is here: about eight (8000) thousand mummified corpses, some placed in niches in the walls of the galleries, some standing up, the whole producing a very strange effect.

"Very interesting, a scene of inexpressible ghastliness."

Details follow: "Skeletons, still covered with their skins dressed; some wear evening dress and gloves . . . The expression of some of those mummies change their expression from a tragic one into a comic one; and this is because the skin on its way to destruction keeps on moving, very slowly, of course, giving to those faces from time to time various expressions" . . .

The Great Reaper, it would seem, is far from indifferent (in this particular milieu) to social distinctions: "If the family paid more put the body in a box protected by a glass, so that all the body can be visible . . . If they paid cheap price they put it in a niche." ("Some of them," our author adds, with a distinctly snobbish relish, "are lying underneath of Wealthy family.") Others were even less fortunate: "Most

interesting to see . . . is the body of a little child, named Ernesta Maria di Paola which was only eight days old when it die (1855) mummified." One concludes that the monks were apt, on occasion, to be a little premature in their ministrations.

The March of Progress, however, could not (even in Palermo) be resisted, and "In 1881 the Government . . . put a stop to the mummification of dead bodies, because it was unhealthy otherwise the monks would have mummified all Palermo."

The city (or most of it) was fortunately spared—a notable triumph of State over Church; but the Church, very rightly, has not omitted to draw an appropriate moral, and the slim little pamphlet includes a "sonnet" (contributed by that venerable and prolific writer "Anon") which is well worth quoting, not only for the loftiness of its sentiments but also for the sheer beauty of its diction:

Now that you are intirely aware
of what human misery, consists
have you, my brother any doubt, there
to affirm that greatness is vane
and that by the fatal fate, as it were,
oppressed you saw beauty, mondane,
vivacity, pageantry splendour luxury
which are nothing but worldly insane?
Heaven calls you now to give your
account

Why then staggering where is your
impudence?

Dont you care to settle for the amount
of sins for which excuse is not
sufficient?

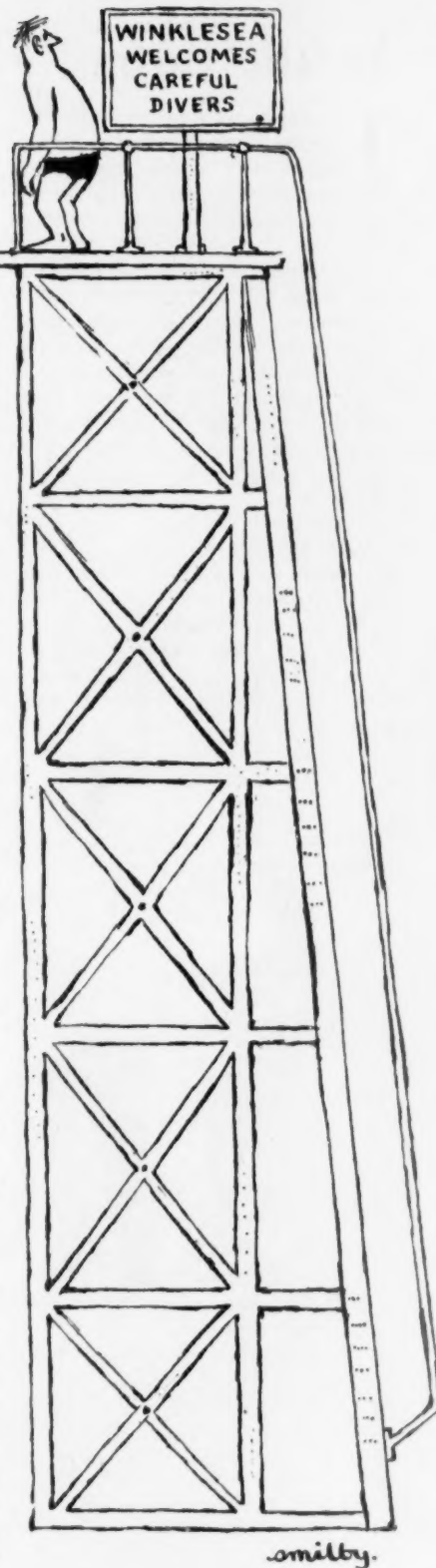
Have you not yet observed what is a
sound

mind of a perfect man who uses to
depend

Only upon a good method of life all
around?

Such words as these should give the
sceptical tourist furiously to think.

A literary friend points out that the
manner of this sonnet owes much to the
late Fr. G. M. Hopkins—in particular,
the additional line appended, so
felicitously, to the sestet.



In the Swim

By ANTHONY CARSON

IT seemed impossible, but my brother Tim said "Dive through the waves." It was at Sidmouth and I was eight. I couldn't really swim, but I could paddle like a dog. When an enormous wave came along, grinding its white teeth like a wolf, I thought it was stupid and I was certain I would be swallowed up in an underworld of thunder, but I plunged into its belly. There was a smooth world of crystal, just a slight undertow and then I came out the other side. A pause, another dive, a calm flurry—the impossible storm of a wave's heart, and a riding

carpet of spent froth. It was like walking between the legs of an angry man. The waves of the sea didn't frighten me any more.

But the sea did. Although I learnt to swim well, I was always obsessed by the idea of sea-serpents, monsters, sharks and swordfish. This watery fear was not helped by something which happened in Australia. Normally I could swim miles in the urban measurements of a swimming bath. Nothing could happen there, beyond the suburban twinge of chlorine in the nostrils, or a fat man diving on to your back. No

rubbery caress from a monster cephalopod, no saurian teeth rising out of the water. But in Australia, when I was twenty-one, a particular swimming bath betrayed its ordered, cosy reputation.

It happened in Sydney. An Australian called Tiny, because of his enormous size, suggested we should go swimming together. "There's a disused swimming bath in Coogee," he said. "It's boarded up. No charge. Fair dinkum. I know how to get in." I agreed, so we set off for this swimming bath, and when we arrived there we climbed over a wooden fence and entered the building. It was a long bath, and the water looked clean. "Sea water," said Tiny. "Comes through the mesh at the end." We undressed, not worrying about bathing suits, and dived in. I had just learned the crawl, and rolled through the water in my new pride, bubbling through my nose, and finning my feet.

Suddenly Tiny climbed out of the water and sat on the stone floor, watching me. Evidently appreciates my style, I thought, curving my arms like scimitars and pressing through the still water. "Who's your friend?" shouted Tiny, pointing. "What?" I shouted, rolling over on my back. "Your friend," repeated Tiny. I didn't know what he was talking about. I turned over again, buried my face in the water and continued swimming. When I reached the far end of the bath, near the mesh, I lifted my head out of the water and waved to Tiny. "Why don't you come in?" I shouted. He pointed. He was dancing about on the floor, pointing. He was laughing his head off.

Then I turned over and saw a fin. It was like a sail on a toy boat, except that it was black. Farther up the bath were two other sails and one of them was quite enormous. I had seen these sails before, glinting up the Panama canal, and I knew that they belonged to sharks. I swallowed some water, choked and began threshing. I had a sick feeling of nightmare, nausea but also a wave of anger. After all, a swimming pool. Right over one of those hideous fins I could see a notice saying PLEASE DEPOSIT YOUR VALUABLES IN THIS OFFICE. I spat out the water and wind-milled towards the side of the pool, throwing



"Oh, what a relief! For one moment I thought you were selling something."



style, dignity and correct breathing to hell. I heaved myself out of the water and lay on the floor panting. Tiny came over to me.

He was shaking with laughter. "Sharks," he said. "They obviously don't like Pommies." "Why couldn't you have told me at first?" I asked him angrily. "I did," he said. "I thought you didn't mind. You did two lengths with the big one." He stopped laughing and pointed towards the end of the pool. "They're repairing the mesh," he said. "That's why the pool's closed. There's no mesh there now. The bath leads straight into the sea."

But it isn't only large creatures that disturb me. Anything can happen in the sea. You don't need to see the enemy. One of these invisible attacks occurred in the North of Spain, where I had taken a party of students for a summer course arranged by the University of Barcelona. All nationalities were represented. One evening it was suggested that we should have an enormous punch party on the beach, followed by a midnight swim.

It was an ideal night. The punch flowed, the air was balmy, the sea

creamed on the sand, and you could hear girls crying NO in at least fifteen languages up and down the beach. Then we took off our clothes and raced into the water, splashing out towards the Balearics. Presently a scream rose into the air, due north. This scream was caught up by other screams, working south, until it reached me, and was carried on down the beach.

We had run into a jellyfish zone. It was like falling in nettles. I turned quickly round and raced for the beach, but the night was extremely dark so that I couldn't see where I was swimming. I carried on for half an hour, backwards and forwards through the jellyfish, until at last I felt ground under my feet and tottered, shivering on to the shore. I hadn't the slightest idea where I was: I was stinging, I was cold.

In any case Spain is the last country in the world in which to be discovered stark naked, particularly if you are an accredited group leader in charge of young girls. I wandered about the beach, and then decided to shout. After five minutes' shouting I started to dance. It was the only way to keep warm. At that moment a torch was shone on to

me. It started on my face and worked steadily down, stopped, and returned to my face again. "Good evening," I said. The owner of the torch was invisible and said nothing. "I have been swimming," I said, "and now I do not know where I am." My teeth were chattering. "I have clothes somewhere," I added.

Then the invisible man spoke. "Have you a passport or any means of identification?" "No," I said. "Have you relatives or people responsible for you in the vicinity?" "I am a student," I said. "My name is Antonio Carson." "Ah," said the voice. "You are one of the students. There are apparently hundreds of these students stranded on this beach. They are being hunted. Your clothes will be in that direction." He pointed with his torch. "Good night, and long live Franco."

Only once have I been near drowning. This occurred in the Camargue, at Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. When you walk past the post office and the Marine restaurant you come to a little stretch of sandy beach flanked by a jetty. The mistral blows, the waves shift away the sand near the jetty and leave a deep



"He offered me riches, tap water, a life of ease . . ."

chasm. Then there is a festival of sun in the sky, the sand is laughing, the church bells ring out, the radio blares from the café in the square, and the tourists come down to swim. In no time at all there is a shout. "Help, help. Someone is drowning. By the jetty." The beach mills with people, and a fisherman always jumps off the jetty, saves the victim and receives a reward. "We've got to live," said an old sailor to me once, wetting his finger and lifting it in the air.

One morning I went down to the beach in the middle of a mistral and decided to go for a swim. The waves came for the shore like lions, the sea was worried like a rat, and it was cold as a well. I walked out quite a way on hills of sand and then dived into the charging cavalry. In no time at all I was swept away by a current and found myself right up against the jetty. It was impossible to climb on to this jetty, and there was no fisherman there. So I swam about, freezing from cold, for a quarter of an hour, shouting. It was impossible to fight against the current. The mistral hissed and blew through its sandy teeth, and the water boiled, so my shouts were unheard. I let myself sink in the water. Immediately my feet touched sand and I could see the water coming up only to my knees. The sand had changed its

direction. The next day there was no drowning, and the fishermen had to wait for the next mistral.

Fear of sea-monsters was responsible for an extraordinary happening in Cas Catala. Cas Catala is a small white pleasure port in Mallorca, at the northern tip of Palma. It bristles with millionaires, yachting caps, tennis and champagne. There is a jetty and sleek bobbing sailing boats and flagged motor launches. Even the water looks smart. A small party of students and myself had hired a launch in order to visit some islands about ten miles away.

On the return journey, as we approached Cas Catala, one of the students and myself, arguing about one of the girls, fell into the water. Luckily we were wearing only bathing shorts. The driver of the boat took no notice of the incident but continued steering towards the harbour. There we were in the middle of the sea. Immediately I began to imagine I was seeing monsters. I shouted something about giant squids and, infected by panic, we both raced for the jetty rather than take the longer way round to the orthodox beach. Panting from exertion, we circled the jetty and splashed into the harbour. My companion gave a weak hoot of

relief. But we were met by a cream-coloured launch, packed with millionaires and high-class sporting girls, someone blared on a klaxon, and a man ran forward shouting at us.

"Go away," he yelled. "Get out of this harbour at once. YOU'RE NOT BOATS." Faces appeared from the windows of the yacht-club hotels. Figures ran along the wharf shaking their fists. But although we weren't yachts we had to continue swimming until we reached the landing stage. We clambered out of the water, approached by three important-looking men in yachting caps.

"What is the meaning of this disgraceful conduct?" asked one of them, throwing down a half-finished cigar. I tried to explain what had happened. "It is the first time in the history of the Club that anyone has *swum* into this harbour," said the second. "We have never even made rules about it." "The possibility was never even *considered*," said the third. "Gentlemen with a knowledge of correctness," said the first and angriest, "do not *swim* into harbours."

We apologized. And as we went away to dress in the Gents we could hear the first speaker say in a trembling voice: "One of these senores actually *hooted*."

Soft Sing Cuckoo

NOW that the nagging of spring is well behind,
Physical comfort, the mere absence of cold,
Can play hell with a hard-won balance of mind.
I must be careful. I know summer of old.

Anyone can fix Christmas so that the breach
Between pleasure and vicarious pleasure is not too plain;
And the pleasure itself is so far out of reach
That only a fool would hope to have it again.

But summer is almost accessible. There are ways
The wind blows and light touches the skin
That ape the images of remembered days,
Till the most cautious mind can be taken in

And slip into semi-surrender, so as to be
Hesitant and half on terms with hope again,
And court the exasperating absurdity
Of time re-established and the check on the dragged chain.

But forty-two times bitten is fifty shy:
I am too old to expect anything free.
I watch summer's coming with a cautious eye,
Wondering what there is in it for me.

P. M. HUBBARD



"O.K. Get blowing."



"You know, this is going to knock the bottom right out of the science-fiction market."

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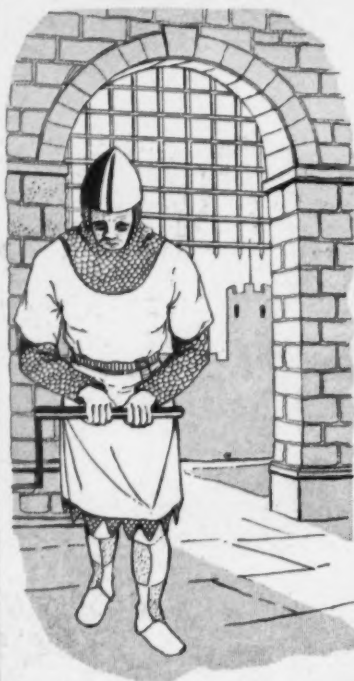


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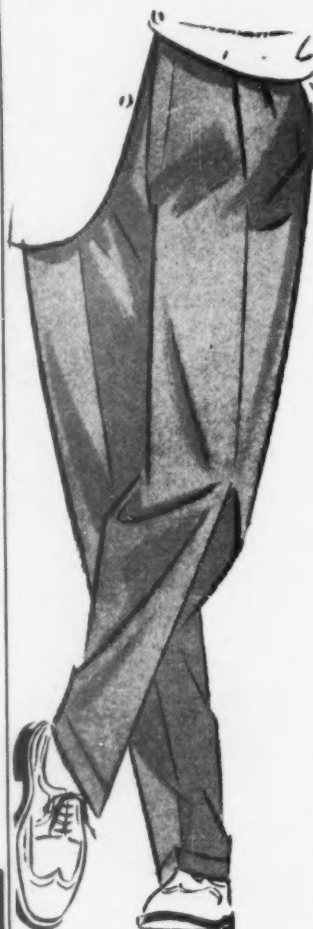
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LF 178



*"They do you very well here; I happen to know
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CAR POLISHING

—an important statement



Car owners are beginning to break up into two camps. Those who welcome the new type of polish that both cleans and polishes a car's surface in one speedy operation. And those who still think the deeper, longer-lasting protection of a wax polish well worth the extra time it takes.

As a car owner you have probably already overheard or taken part in arguments about these two rival methods. Here, then, are some facts about car polishing that matter to the man whose hard-earned cash is running about on four wheels.

A personal affair...

There are two very good reasons for expending time and 'elbow-grease' on cleaning and polishing your car. One is to protect and preserve the bodywork. The other is to give your car a sparkling beauty that is the visible sign of a car that is in prime condition inside and out. Whether you achieve these objects by the quick cleaner-polish method or the slower wax polish method depends upon your personal likes and dislikes. All we can say is that with our knowledge and world-wide experience we are able to give you the best advice on the 'pros and cons' of both methods.

1. The longest-lasting polish



If you are a perfectionist there are no two ways about it. *Simoniz* wax is the polish for you. Only *Simoniz* can protect a car's surface with that unmistakable richly gleaming coat of hard wax that lasts up to half-a-year. The reason why a *Simoniz* finish lasts so long is its extra depth. The blend of hard waxes in the *Simoniz* formula gives the bodywork effective protection which 'seals' it against rain, rust, humid air, and the other causes of hidden corrosion. For six months afterwards a quick wash-and-wipe is all that's needed to bring up a superb 'Exhibition model' shine. At 5/- a large tin this makes 'Simonizing' the most economical, as well as the best method of polishing a car.



2. The quickest quick-polish

But some people are in a hurry. They want speed — quick results. That is why they get so enthusiastic about a new quick polish. And—without a doubt—*Bodysheen* is the best of the new 'combined operation' polishes. It cleans and polishes in one go. Only when there's hard grime and mud need you wash down first. Usually you just spread *Bodysheen* on. Then wipe off—that's all. It's marvellous what happens! The sleek glistening beauty—the shining brilliance of finish—surpasses that of any other quick polish. *Bodysheen* is the quickest quick-polish of all.

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Well, there they are—the facts about the new developments in car polishes. Which would you rather have—the finest and longest-lasting car polish in the world or the best of the quick cleaner-polishes on sale today? *Simoniz* offer you both. Both perfect in their own way. Which is worth remembering when you consider that next to his home, his car is a man's most valuable possession.

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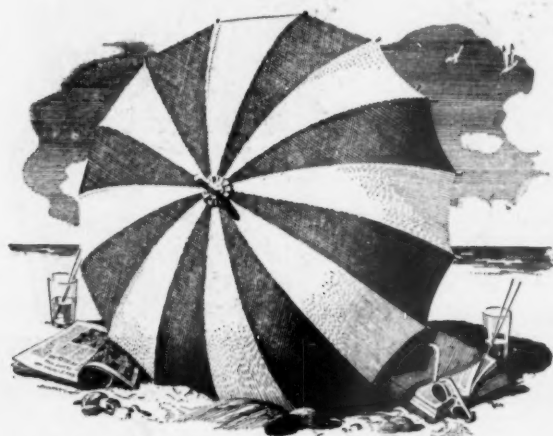
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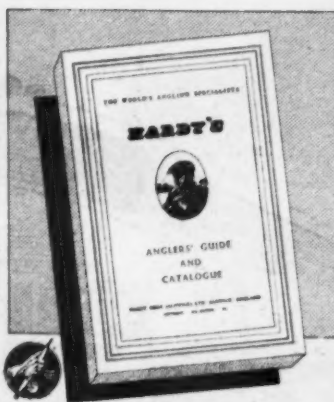
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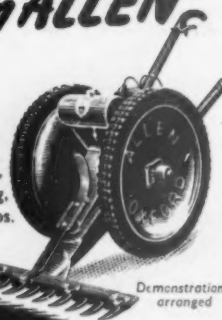
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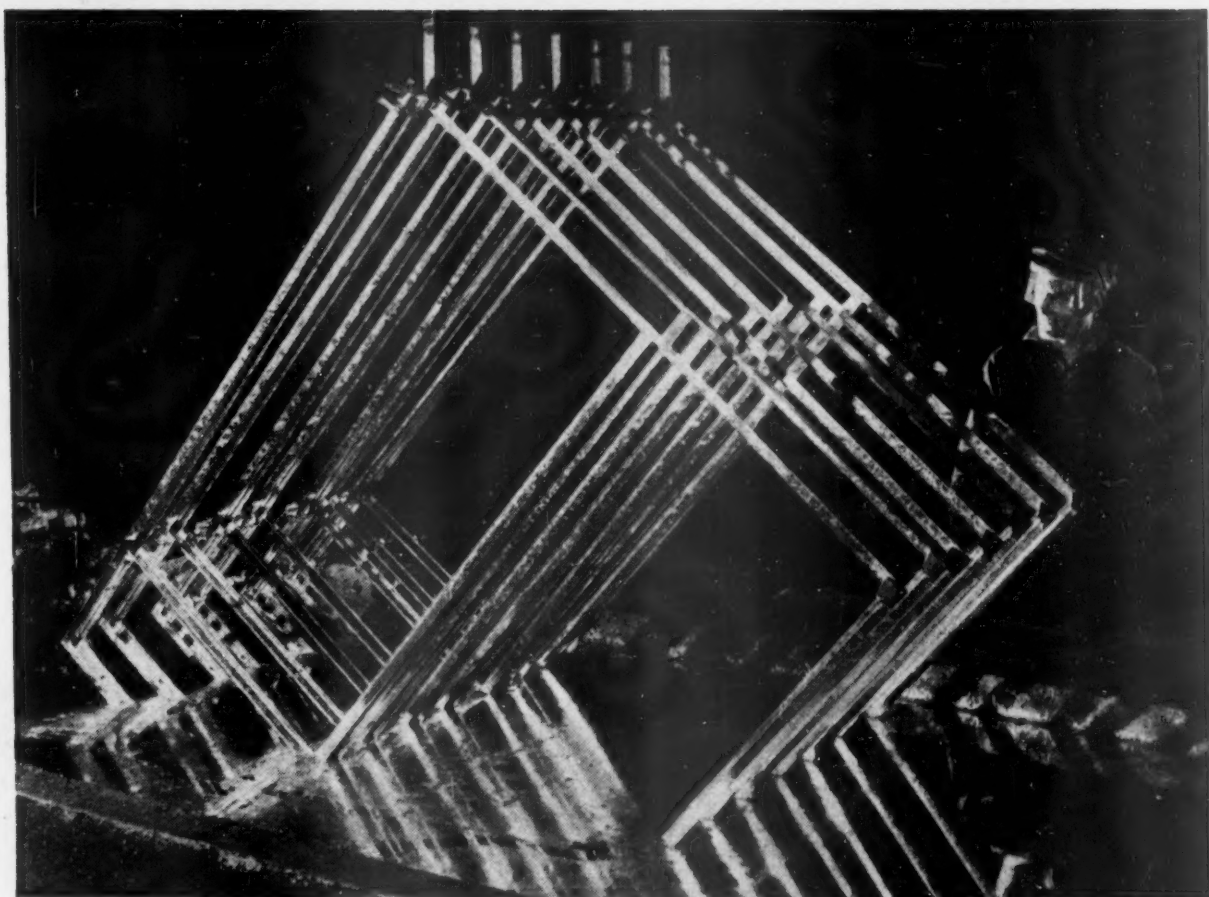
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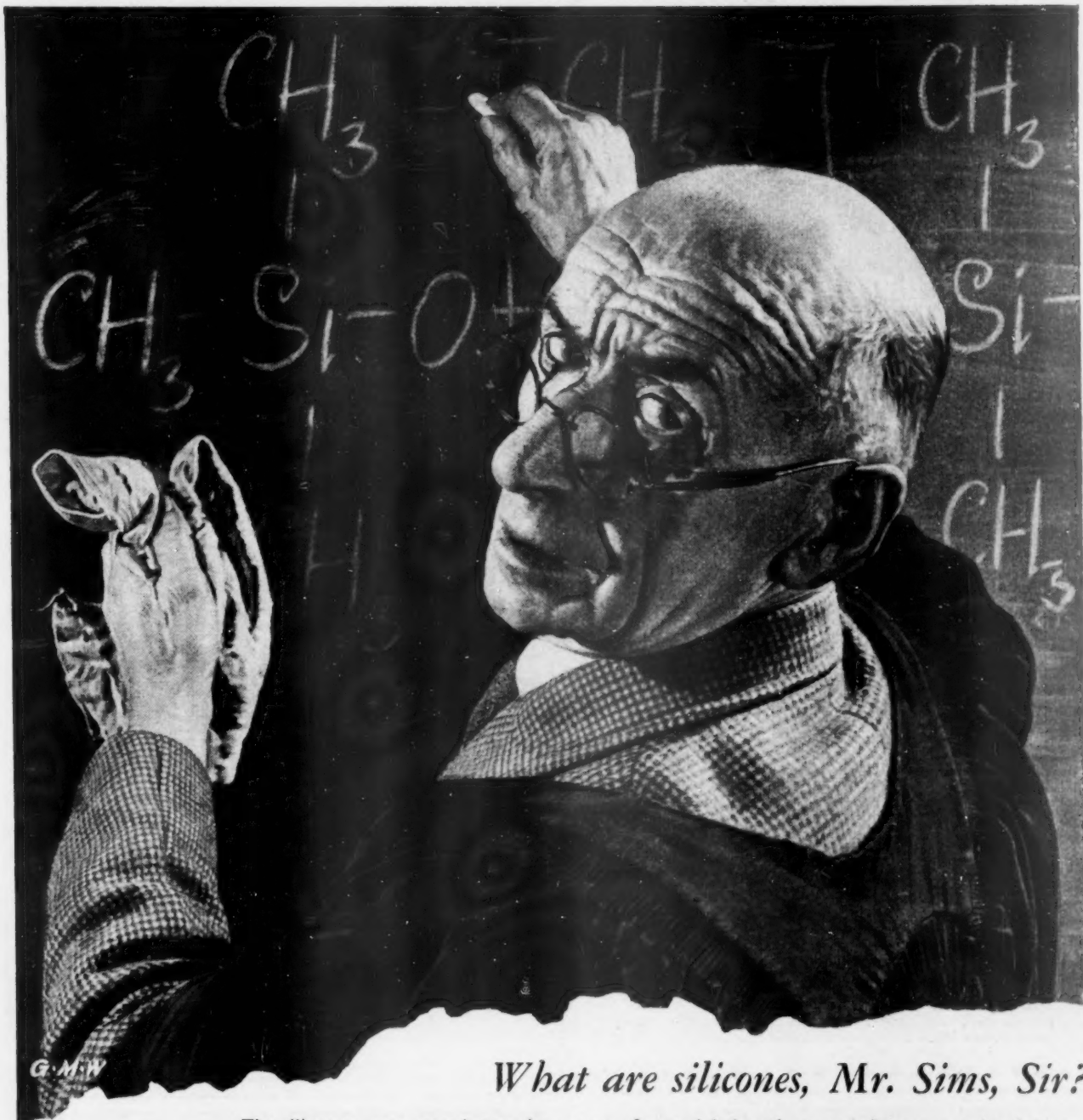
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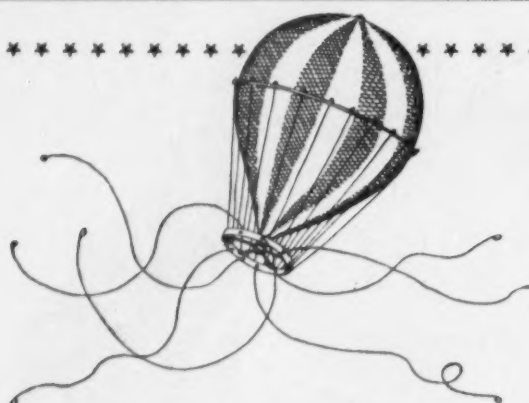
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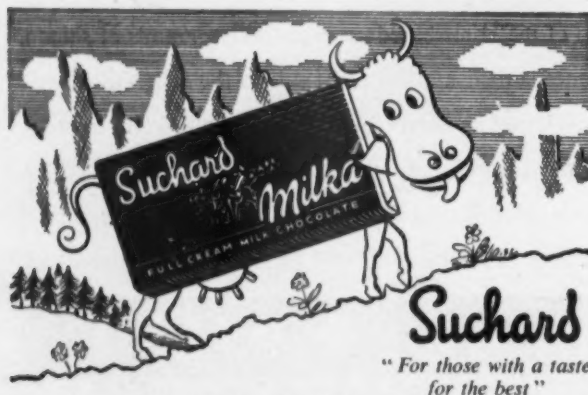


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spectatorship nowadays. Staggering along the towpath,
dodging along to the tote: loping over the fairway,
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your ease in 'Turf': made by Church's new Whipflex
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For nearest Agent's address write to Church & Co. Ltd., Duke St., Northampton
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Punch, May 31 1954



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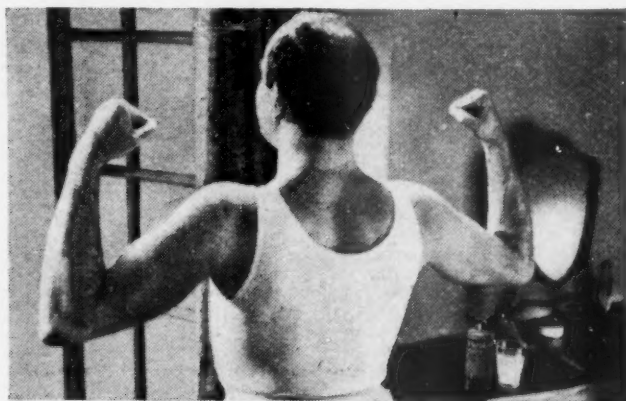
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Or rather, he has safely left the job of *oxygen-cleaning* his dentures to "Steradent," while he does his daily dozen.

Like all fastidious wearers of dentures, he knows the importance of cleaning them *thoroughly* with something made for the purpose.

He knows that the kindest way to clean dentures properly is to steep them every day for 20 minutes in half a tumbler of water which

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It always pays to use something made for the job, and Steradent is so economical. Buy a flask today: 2/5 and 1/4.

*Leave the job to **Steradent**
— specially made to clean dentures*



*"Tell
him
to go
to..."*



... see somebody else. I've got a
frightfully full week, Smithers. Tell him
to see the office manager... he won't?
Well, who the deuce does he think he is?
A man from Sumlock, eh!...
Well, that's a different kettle of fish.
I'll see him at 11.30 on Wednesday..."

.....

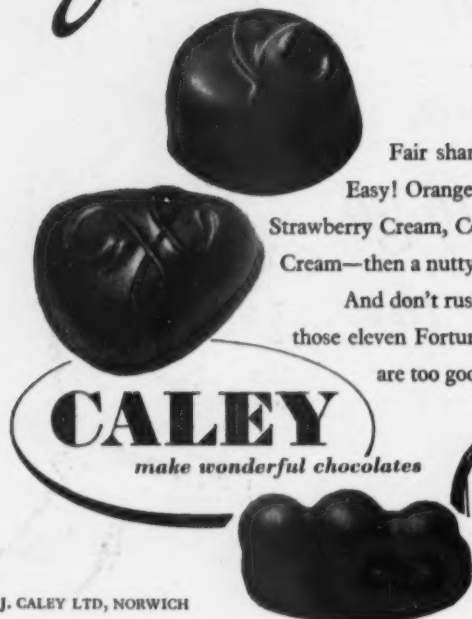
Busy men know that half an hour with a SUMLOCK consultant is time well spent... Because figuring the SUMLOCK way can transfer a load of routine office work from senior executives to junior staff—
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Easy! Orange Cream,
Strawberry Cream, Coffee
Cream—then a nutty one each.

And don't rush it:
those eleven Fortune centres
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F79

Nous avons changé tout cela

Once upon a time, storms
were not in tea-cups. They
were on bread-and-butter
plates. Children preferred
cake. Parents said, 'bread-
and-butter first'. Children

were adamant. Parents glowered.

But gradually children came to learn which side their
bread was buttered. And parents found themselves
faced with the remarkable problem of making supplies
of bread-and-butter keep up with demand.

Overnight, almost, parents found they could turn
to good account this excellent change in their children's
taste. Now they could give them Hovis and butter,
Hovis and honey, Hovis and jam . . . however it came,
the nutty flavour of Hovis found favour in the mouth
of the modern child.

And what's so good about Hovis? In a word—wheat-
germ. That's why it tastes so much more interesting
than ordinary bread. That's
why it's so good for all
the family (but for good-
ness sake, don't tell the
children this).



Zut alors...



No, darling, he isn't swearing—
that's just what the French say when
the waiter takes more than two
minutes to bring their Lillet. Lillet,
darling, Lillet. It's the most heavenly
apéritif. You mean to tell me you've
never tasted it? Zut, alors, as they say,
you must have one at once. Garçon!



LILLET

is the finest and the most ex-
hilarating of all apéritifs. It is a matured blend of white wines, is made
exclusively in one small region of France, and is preferred by intelligent
gastronomes all over the world. Drink Lillet on its own with
ice and a sliver of lemon — or with one-third gin.

He loves me . . . he loves me not . . . but there's
no doubt in her mind that the love of her life is Peter Scott
Sportswear*—knitted and fully fashioned—
easy on the eye, easy to wear and easy on the purse.



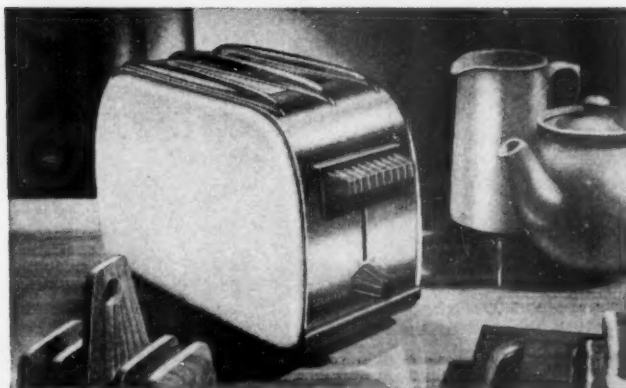
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to charming and in a
rainbow of colours*



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PERFECT GIN
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Best results are easily obtained by simply mixing Gordon's
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add a thin slice of lemon and relax . . .
Then you'll have proved to yourself that there's
nothing, absolutely nothing, so good as
Gordon's* Gin and Tonic.



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TO THE LATE
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*ASK FOR IT BY NAME

Gordon's

Stands Supreme

MAXIMUM PRICES: BOTTLE 33/9d • ½ BOTTLE 17/7d • ¼ BOTTLE 9/2d • MINIATURE 3/7d • U.K. ONLY

And these are Gordon's too...

GORDON'S ORANGE GIN & LEMON GIN

Not to be confused with gin and
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sugar. Best taken neat as a liqueur,
but also most refreshing with Soda
Water or Tonic Water if preferred.

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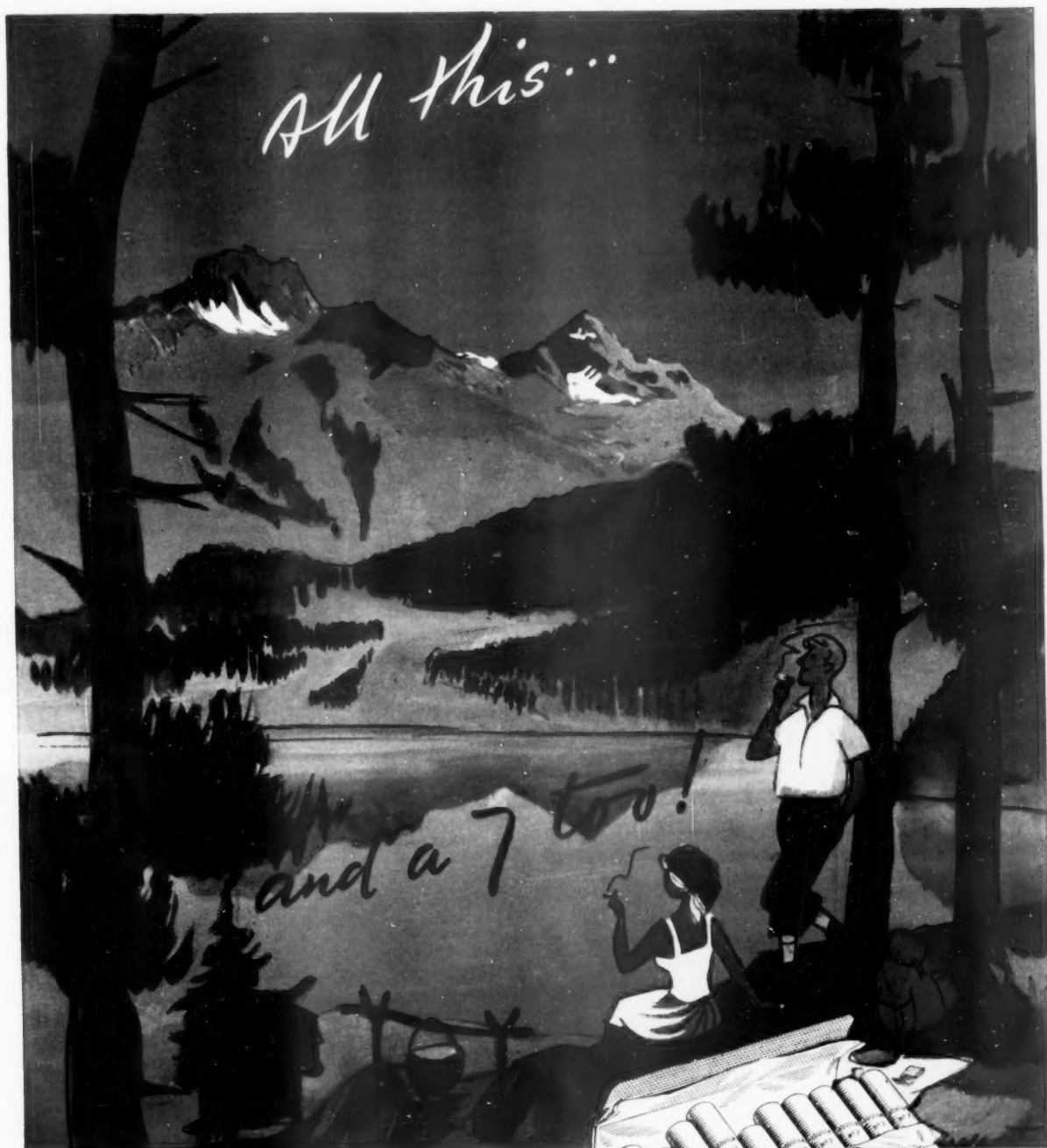


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*Under a sky whose colour is a silvery variation
on a theme of blue . . . High above the comfortable valley,
but still as far as ever from the ancient, lonely peaks . . .
Content for a moment with oneself, with one another and even
with all the world . . . And for perfection one thing more—*

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